

SHOES and RATIONS FOR A LONG MARCH

H·CLAY·TRUMBULL

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SHOES AND RATIONS
FOR A LONG MARCH

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SHOES AND RATIONS FOR A LONG MARCH

OR

NEEDS AND SUPPLIES
IN EVERY-DAY LIFE

BEING SERMON - GROWTHS FROM AN
ARMY CHAPLAIN'S TALKS IN CAMP
AND FIELD AND PRISON AND AT HOME

By H. CLAY TRUMBULL

Former Regimental Chaplain United States Volunteers ; Author of "The Knightly Soldier," "War Memories of an Army Chaplain," "Studies in Oriental Social Life," "The Blood Covenant," etc.

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H. CLAY TRUMBULL.

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HOW THESE SERMONS CAME TO BE PREACHED

As I was never called to have the help or the hindrances of training in a divinity school or a theological seminary, no sermons of mine will show the characteristics of one who was thus trained. I was ordained as a clergyman when called, while a layman, to be a regimental chaplain in the Civil War. My work of preaching was the work of addressing my fellow-men on subjects in which they and I had an interest in common. I had never taken any lessons on the best way of preparing a sermon, or of preaching one. Whatever of practical experience I had had that might be of service to me in such preparation, had been obtained in political speaking "on the stump," and in talks in Sunday-school conventions and at neighborhood religious gatherings.

My chief service and training in political speaking had, indeed, been in the early days of the Republican party, when the issue was simple, and when personal feeling on both sides was intense. The main question at that time was, Shall slavery be permitted to extend into territory now free, or must it be resisted at any and every cost? I learned then to strive to make my every appeal and argument and word tell on that

single point, every time I spoke. This was the main thought in my homiletics of then. I did not, in those days, try to make a finished discourse. I did try to show electors how they ought to vote.

In consequence of this preliminary training, or this lack of such training, my sermons were naturally unconventional, and not conformed to the standards prevailing in training-schools for clergymen. This is true of those sermons written and preached after, as during, the war. I never did, nor could I ever, preach a sermon except as a truth or a message possessed me which I desired to have possess those before whom I stood. In many cases a sermon preached under peculiar circumstances in army-life was reshaped and preached repeatedly in home life in later years. But the spirit and method were much the same in both places and cases, even though the phrasing and the chosen illustrations might be different because of the different hearers and circumstances.

Had my sermons been a formal treatment of a subject, or of a truth, I might have shared the feeling of a well-known clergyman who said he would "as soon take an emetic as preach an old sermon." But as I never preached unless a message possessed me as so important that I wanted to repeat it and re-repeat it, so long as there was need of its being heard, my interest in a special message grew as the truth grew on me. If I saw a neighbor's house on fire in the night, I should want to cry "Fire, Fire," and I should want to repeat that cry so long as the danger existed

and helpers were not yet aroused. My danger-calls from the pulpit were comparatively few, but a sense of the importance of each one of them grew on me steadily. This will account for the characteristics of these sermons, as from the standpoint of the army chaplain, and even those sermons which were preached in the home camp.

Three of my sermons, as preached to my regiment on special occasions, were, at the request of the officers and men, published during the war. These and other army sermons are described in the chapter entitled "A Chaplain's Sermons," in my volume, "War Memories of an Army Chaplain" (published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York).

My preaching as an army chaplain inevitably shaped and influenced all my sermons preached since that day. Wherever I was as a preacher, my training and my chaplain experiences caused me always to consider myself as an army chaplain talking to soldiers of their personal duties and needs.

Because some valued friends, both lay and clerical, have repeatedly urged me to publish a selection from these sermons, as illustrative of the spirit and method of such work, I have now decided to do so. And in accordance with the suggestion of the same friends, I have prefaced some of the sermons with a statement of the circumstances under which they were originally written, together with facts as to their later use.

As here given, these sermons are fuller and more extended than as preached at any one time. Illustrations

tions, paragraphs, or sections were omitted in their preaching, so as to bring them within proper limits. But the discourses are now given in their entirety, so as to show the richer possibilities of the subjects treated.

H. CLAY TRUMBULL.

PHILADELPHIA, *October 23, 1903.*

A SHOE SERMON

I

A SHOE SERMON

On one of our Union army marches along the roads of North Carolina, in 1862, I was made to realize as never before the importance of easy and durable shoes as a means of giving soldiers comfort and efficiency. Some of the new regiments at that time were provided, at private expense, with costly and attractive-appearing calf-skin shoes, that fitted closely the feet of the soldiers. These looked well on the city streets or in the camp. They seemed to be very fine, for a time, in contrast with the rough and coarse army shoes of the veteran soldier. But when worn on a long march, over roads of clay or sand, they made the swelling feet of the wearer sore, while the coarser-looking army shoe proved far better fitted for the every-day duties of a soldier. The true test proved to be, not looks, but service.

As the days passed on, on the march, the costly and fine-looking shoes were actually taken off and thrown aside on the road, while their weary wearers had to trudge along in their stocking feet, hoping to be able to get back to camp by and by, and secure some of the before-despised but wisely-planned army shoes.

And I learned a new lesson from this, of the soldier's dependence on his foot-covering in the path of duty.

Out of that lesson grew this sermon. It was preached in the army, and again later elsewhere. It was re-written and freshly arranged, with other illustrations, as adapted to other communities. As based on the text chosen, I originally called the sermon "Man's Strength Proportioned to Duty." I preached it in various pulpits from Massachusetts to California, as my life was then a peripatetic one, and as the lesson of this sermon seemed adapted to any community.

At one time, being invited to pass a Sunday in Salem, Massachusetts, I was, in advance, requested by the pastor to preach this sermon, of which he had heard. Reaching Salem on Saturday evening, I found it announced in one of the papers that the next day "Chaplain Trumbull of Hartford" was to preach in town, and by special request he was to give his "famous Shoe Sermon." Then, and thus at other times, I learned that the sermon was known as "Chaplain Trumbull's Shoe Sermon." But the subject of the sermon seems to me to be worth considering, by whatever name it is known.

STRENGTH PROPORTIONED TO DUTY

Thy shoes shall be iron and brass ; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be (Deut. 33 : 25).

Have you ever realized how much of one's comfort, and one's efficiency for service, depends on one's shoes? Peculiarly is it true that if a man would travel, or would do work in the world, he must have a foot-covering that is easy and durable.

An officer of the Smithsonian Institution, after examining the collection of foot-gear from all parts of the world in the National Museum at Washington, said, on this subject: "It is a curious fact which seems to have been overlooked, that while other parts of the human costume have been more intimately associated with the enjoyment of life, and [with] decoration, than with mere bodily comfort, the shoe has had a more serious history. It is really an instrument of travel and transportation. All the savage and barbarous peoples of the earth that stay at home are barefooted; and it is only when they go away from home, and carry burdens upon a common path, that they begin to look after the interest of that important organ called the foot."

A Chinese wife who is not expected to leave home,

and who need not work while there, requires no stout or soft shoe to take her ease in. But the sturdy peasant woman of Holland or Belgium, who does more than her share of toil and travel, must have her wooden *säböt* to enable her to keep up with or to go ahead of her brother or husband. The athletic young woman of England and America could not be at the front to-day, as she is, without the well-laced bicycle gaiters, the strong golf-boots, and the stout walking-shoes, such as are advertised on every side.

It is said that he who should invent a shoe that would neither soon wear out nor make the foot of the walker sore would do more for the science of war than he who invented or improved the most powerful enginery of destruction. And this was the thought of Napoleon when he said that ten thousand men moved twenty miles a day are more than a match for twenty thousand men moved ten miles a day.

The shoes soldiers wear have as much to do with their efficiency as the weapons they carry, according to this standard of judgment. Men who made long and forced marches through the yielding, clinging clay of the roads of the South in springtime or autumn, during our Civil War, in the parching dust of the same region in mid-summer, and over rough, hard-frozen ground in the dead of winter, can appreciate this truth as others are not likely to.

The promise of our text, as we are told, is part of "the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God

blessed the children of Israel before his death" (Deut. 33 : 1). That promise had meaning as first given to a people who had, for a full generation, wandered in the wilderness, and to whom their leader could say, at the close, "Thy raiment [foot-gear included] waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years." (Deut. 8 : 4).

Experiences of the past are made a basis of encouragement for the future. As things have been, by God's blessing, so things shall be to him whom God leads: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

It is durability, rather than softness, that is needed in the sandal worn by the Arab of the desert of Sinai, as he tracks the flint-covered chalk plains where the Israelites wandered in all those years. The sandal used there still is the toughest rawhide obtainable, the best material at hand, most like "iron and brass," to resist the cutting force of the flint knives which must be trodden over hour after hour of every weary day. In the margin of our English Bibles, it is given as an alternative reading of our text, "Under thy soles shall be iron and brass." Shoes that waxed not old in forty years, while the feet above them swelled not, were a God-given blessing that the plainest man could appreciate.

And all that that promise meant to the Israelites of old, it means to every one of God's children to-day. As little Samuel's mother sang of Him in whom she trusted, we can sing in faith of Him who "is the same

yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13 : 8). "He will keep the feet of his saints [his holy ones]" (1 Sam. 2 : 9). "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Psa. 48 : 14).

"Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." While God leads the way, we shall have shoes for every march, and strength for every contest to which we are summoned until the end of our pilgrim course. Do we really believe that? Are we ready to trust God's word to us, as to our shoes, and as to our days? The question is not whether *God* is willing to do as he has promised, but whether *we* are ready to rest on that promise.

Even when men see before them the pillar of fire and of cloud, marking out their path of duty, and when they hear behind them the voice of God's Spirit, or God's providences, saying in unmistakable terms, "This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isa. 30 : 21), how common it is for them to fear lest their shoes or their strength shall fail!

The young man going out, in search of honest employment, from a quiet country home into the exciting and bewildering whirl of a great city, is very apt to feel, as he yields to temptations from without and to evil promptings from within, that his moral shoes would have stood the wear and tear of a country roadside; but that these city pavements are too hard treading for such tender feet as his—even with the strongest covering he can have for them.

If he goes to sea, in the line of plain duty, he is likely to think that, in parting with the gospel institutions of the land, he leaves hope of a practical religious life behind him. Finding the means of support for himself and for his loved ones in a factory village, it is possible that he will think that no other place was ever so full of inducements to evil, so barren of helps to a course of rectitude, as this. Becoming a student at the academy or the university of his own or of parents' most careful selection, he will perhaps believe that almost any similar institution of learning would have proved to him a surer school of virtue.

If he is employed on a railroad, or at a hotel, or in a hospital, or in an apothecary's shop; if he becomes a mechanic, or a fisherman, or a street laborer, or a policeman,—whatever he has to do, or wherever his lot is cast, he is prone to take the same view of the resistless power of his surroundings—or of his “environment” as men call it now-a-days.

And this in face of the fact that city life, with all its temptations, develops some of the highest types of personal piety and Christian manliness; that in forecandle, steerage, and cabin, men who follow the sea are found faithfully following Christ; that each factory village and mining district shows noble specimens of godly manufacturers and operatives; that in the very academy or university where he is now studying, are those, no better circumstanced than himself, who honor their Christian profession; and that God

has his faithful witnesses at hotels, in hospitals, and on railroads, in camp and on the march, in stores and workshops, and in professions and in business life, and among the busy toilers and burden-bearers of every proper pursuit of mankind.

Nor is it the young alone who question the fitness of their moral shoes, and the fulness of their moral strength in God's service. Men and women of maturer years also hesitate to cast themselves confidently on the promise that is distinct and unequivocal to every soul ready to stand or to march as God directs, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Yet the promise of this text rests not alone on its primal declaration. Its truth is continually reaffirmed to every observing, reflecting, believing mind, in the lessons of sight, of experience, and of faith.

1. All the teachings of nature enforce this text.

Nature, we say, adapts its gifts to the need of its creatures. That is, God gives a supply corresponding with the demand, in all his works of creation.

Wings are for the air, fins are for the sea, feet are for the ground, webbed feet are for the swimming bird. The beaver knows for what its broad, stout tail is designed. The ant-eater understands the purpose of its prolonged snout, as the eagle does of its talons and beak, the porcupine of its quills, and the cuttle-fish of its inky store. The camel's water-tank hump meets the want of the drougthy desert, as its spreading

foot does the yielding sand. The elephant's proboscis, the flukes of the whale, the shell of the turtle, the wing-hooks of the little bat, and the spider's webloom, meet each a peculiar want of the specific owner. And God's wisely bestowed gifts to his dumb creatures are often changed with changing circumstances or locations. The varying seasons or temperature bring to many an animal a change of coats. The horse and the dog have different coverings from nature in January and in July; and the farther north we go the thicker and warmer we find the fur of the otter or sable, and the hair of the fox or bear.

As with animate creations, so with inanimate. No stalk is so frail and fragile as the rank sprout springing up in the close, dark cellar, where there is least call to meet exposure; while the tree that stands all exposed on the open plain to the storms of heaven has strength from heaven, above its species in the protecting forest; and that tree is ever stoutest which has been most tried.

When the branches are so shaken by the wind that the whole tree sways to and fro as though tottering for a fall,—then, in the hour of danger, nature gives new and needed strength, by sending down the roots deeper into the upholding soil, and by packing the earth closer about roots and trunk, so that after the storm has passed away, the tree when again at rest is only firmer than before in the place where God has bidden it to stand fast, having had reaffirmed to it the declaration which nature makes unvaryingly to all its

minor creations: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

And to *man* nature says the same, concerning his bodily and mental organization and development, as to the lower orders of creation. He whose work calls for most strength, has most. He whose new circumstances necessitate greater powers of endurance, finds those powers enlarging. The blacksmith's arm or the arm of the college oarsman grows strong, not weak, by use. The railway or hotel porter keeps pace, in his lifting power, with the expanding size of a lady's traveling trunk, as he continues year after year at his toil. The child of poverty who has no protecting shoes finds his bare feet becoming almost as iron and brass, on the flinty road and among the briers of the field. The student, in heavily taxing his memory, finds his memory more tenacious.

Other things being equal, he who studies most, or who teaches most, has not only the best stored mind, but the most active brain, and the freest mental faculties. Use summons strength. Supply follows demand. Give your son a few months with an exploring party on the frontier, or let him have a season of camping-out in the woods, or a real fishing cruise along our northeastern coast,—with the exposures and privations of such a life,—and see if the change in him, in consequence, is not one of increased muscular compactness, and of added vitality and energy, as well as of improved appetite and browned complexion. As he needs more strength he is likely to have more.

Recall the numberless verifications of this truth in the experiences of our Civil War. Many a delicate youth, or enfeebled man, who then grew stronger and gained health amid the endurances of camp and campaigning,—under exposures and privations which would have killed him at his home, where such exposures and privations were unnecessary,—could answer the inquiry how it was possible for him to live through and actually to thrive by such endurances, only by affirming that nature had, in his case, again made good the assurance it proffers to every man in the path of duty anywhere: “Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

2. Moreover, the experiences of mankind bear constant witness to the truth of our text.

In practical life we find that that man is not holiest who is remotest from surroundings of evil. “The nearer the church, the farther from God,” has passed into an adage, because of human liability to go astray in even the most religious neighborhood. Peculiar privileges bring peculiar temptations. Says an old commentator, “The Lord never revives his work but the devil revives his; and he has a spire of sin for every spire of grace.”

“Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The devil always builds a chapel there.”

It was while God was still manifesting his awful presence at Sinai, that Israel made the golden calf to worship. And it was “after the sop” of affection and

confidence at the Last Supper, that Satan entered into Judas (John 13 : 24-27). "It is the man bringing his dividend from the bank door," says quaint John Newton, "who has most cause to dread the pilferer's hand."

No religious atmosphere excludes temptation; no religious occupation destroys its power. Sinful promptings and impellings have to be met and battled in the closet and in the prayer-meeting, in the pulpit and in the pew, in visits of Christian charity, and even at the table of our Lord. On the other hand, no presence of evil necessitates indulgence in sin. Some of the godliest men and women in the world are those whose purity and uprightness stand out the more because of their surroundings of vice and wickedness.

The Christian missionary in a heathen land, or in our city slums, is not expected to lower his moral standard on account of the vile practices of the people about him. Who would fear that a mission-school teacher would be more liable to swerve from a course of rectitude through the nearness of dens of iniquity to the room in which he pursues his love-inspired work? As a rule, the opposer of evil is found firmer in his purpose of good, and stronger for its prosecution, when brought of God face to face with the enemy he has volunteered to battle.

It is the same with strength against trial as with strength against evil. In quiet home life, many a frail and delicate young mother shows a strength of body in her prolonged and unintermitted watching over, or tending, an invalid child,—or a strength of mind

and soul in rising up under the burden of sudden and terrible bereavement, to care for herself and her children, instead of resting with them as hitherto on another's care,—such powers of endurance and suffering and performance as none who knew her had supposed were hers; such indeed as she did not possess until her new demands summoned the new supply, which is ever ready for those who need and trust.

Did you never see a lad, suddenly bereft of his father, so transformed by his consciousness of new responsibility for the remaining household—so lifted, as it were, to a higher sphere of thought and character by the “evolution of catastrophism”—as to change his whole outward appearance in a few brief days; the expression of his face so maturing, and his manly young form so uplifting and expanding, as to make him hardly recognizable by those who knew him in his days of reliance on the one whose place he is now summoned to fill? As you looked at such a youth, you might have realized anew the truth of our text, and believed that he too had been supplied with new shoes for his new journey, and given strength he had no need of prior to his days of bereavement.

God be praised that such shoes, and such strength, shall never be lacking to any dutiful and trustful disciple of Jesus! For, mark you:

3. The word of God is pledged in confirmation of the promise of our text.

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the

word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa. 40 : 8; 1 Peter 1 : 24, 25). What has been divinely spoken will be divinely fulfilled. Even if the teachings of nature gave no encouragement to a belief in this text, and the experiences of mankind up to this time failed to bear witness to its truth, the child of God would still have the word of God as explicit, and as not to be doubted, that *his* shoes shall be iron and brass; and that as his days, so shall his strength be.

If it be necessary, God can work a miracle—doing that which is far above the ordinary course of nature, and contrary to the lessons of experience. God will work ten thousand miracles before his word shall fail, or one jot or tittle of it pass away unfulfilled.

Hath not God said to each and to all of his trustful children: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isa. 41 : 10); "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. 43 : 2); "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12 : 9),—my power is completest when your need is greatest? And shall not God perform to the uttermost his explicit and oft-repeated promises to the children of his love?

Child of God! take heart then; for nature, experi-

ence and revelation unite to give you cheer. "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Josh. 1 : 9). Never fear the length of the path of duty, nor the flints and thorns which beset its track: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." Never shrink from the wearisomeness of the way where God leads, nor from the sun and the storms of its dragging hours: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

In your home as now constituted (or in any new home to which you may be called); in the profession or occupation you are now pursuing; in the school, or store, or office, or mill, or hotel, or hospital, where you are engaged; with your existing surroundings; with your past record of sins, and follies, and wretched mistakes; with your habits and appetites and passions just as they are,—stand firm, and be strong; yield not to evil, falter not in trust. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10 : 13). You "can do *all* things through Christ which strengtheneth" you (Phil. 4 : 13). Holding the hand of Jesus, you shall not fall nor fail. Your shoes and your strength shall endure unto the end.

"Weary and thirsty—no water-brook near thee,
Press on; nor faint at the length of the way.
The God of thy life will assuredly hear thee:
He will provide thee strength for the day.

“Be trustful, be steadfast, whatever betide thee;
Only one thing do thou ask of the Lord:
Grace to go forward, wherever he guides thee,
Simply believing the truth of his word.”

“Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.” “*Thy* shoes!” “*Thy* days!” Do you note that? Not the shoes, nor the days, of another; but *thine own*.

Be sure then that you stand in your own shoes, that you seek to occupy only your own days. Absalom craved the shoes of his kingly father; he slipped in his effort to walk in them. Jonah would have had strength for a journey to Nineveh; but he lacked it to make the voyage from Joppa to Tarshish.

He who walks in any path but that of duty walks in other shoes than his own; the days he passes there are not his days: he has no strength for their trials or needs. No promise of shoes or strength is to him who walketh in the counsel of the ungodly, or standeth in the way of sinners, or sitteth in the seat of the scornful; who enters into the path of the wicked, and goeth in the way of evil men.

While a man's duty is at sea, his shoes are not suited to land travel; while his duty is in the city, he has not strength for a day in the country, or by the seaside, winter or summer. A mother's place may be, on the Lord's day, in the nursery, while her “soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord” (Psa. 84 : 2). If this be so,—if her place is *there*,—then in that family room, with her children

about her, she can look for such grace,—such delightful, satisfying evidence of God's sacred presence in her heart,—as she could not find in the grandest temple of earth, with the most devoted band of worshipers, sitting under the teachings of the most eloquent and earnest minister of Christ who ever expounded the word of God to a waiting people.

Thus also with the physician, or the nurse, whose station is by the bedside of a suffering patient; thus with the sailor on the vessel's deck, far beyond the sound of the Sabbath bell; with the druggist's clerk, the housemaid, the policeman, or the soldier; thus with him who must teach when he would fain listen; thus with every person who must forgo ordinary means of grace, or meet extraordinary temptations at the post of duty anywhere.

Men of capital, men of labor, professional men, travelers and students, women and children and youth, are to be anxious only as to whether they are in just the place, and at just the occupation to which they have been summoned by the providences of God.

That point settled aright,—as it can be,—and they need have no concern for their surroundings; no fear that they shall there be unable to serve God wholly and heartily and acceptably; for they are more likely to lead a holy life in that place than anywhere else on the face of the whole wide earth, because God can, and does, make city and country and village and ocean, field and workshop and home and school,

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spheres of grace to such of his children as belong there. To all such his heavenly promise rings out clearly and continually above, and yet in truest harmony with, the teachings of successive ages, and in chord with nature's grandest melodies, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

A SERMON ON THIRST

II

A SERMON ON THIRST

The first sermon I preached as a chaplain was written before I was a chaplain, and was planned long before I had any thought of ever being in the Christian ministry; but it was none the less closely connected in its subject and substance with my army chaplaincy. Its truth has grown upon me in its importance in the passing of more than twoscore years.

In 1859 I was in Philadelphia to attend a national Sunday-school convention in Jayne's Hall, on lower Chestnut Street. My host was the venerable Ambrose White, at his home in Arch Street. Going from his residence to the convention, I passed Massey's great brewery, then on Tenth Street, above Market, and its open doors and large vats attracted my attention, and started me on a train of thought. The busy workmen, the rumbling teams, the hundreds of casks, the filled troughs and gutters, which I saw, were an illustration of the constant and costly efforts to satisfy or to minister to men's ceaseless cravings for drink. What want in the world equals thirst, and how vain and mocking are man's endeavors to supply what in this realm is longed for!

As I walked on to the hall, the greatness of that thought grew on me. The words of Jesus at Jacob's Well to the woman of Samaria who asked him for a drink, came to my mind. I thought that day that if I were a clergyman I should want to preach from that text to a thirsty world. As days and years went by, I still had that thought in mind—or that thought had me. When, unexpectedly, I was called to be a regimental chaplain, I thought yet more deeply of that proposed sermon. Having decided to accept the call, I began my first sermon before I was examined for ordination. I first preached the sermon in Williamsburg, Long Island, on my way to my regiment in North Carolina.

Of course, I had occasion to change the form and illustrations of the sermon so as to adapt it more fittingly to a soldier audience as I came to understand soldiers. Yet its truth grew on me steadily. It became a prominent phase of my gospel preaching to soldiers or to civilians. Later I sought to make more vivid and graphic the scene at the well of Jacob. In my library, after the war, I studied the region by the aid of maps and books of travel. I sought to know precisely what could be seen in all directions by a traveler seated by that well. It became one of the points of greatest interest to me in the Holy Land.

Years afterward, when for the first time I was traveling in that region, I had a special desire to be at that very spot. I turned aside from the road between Jerusalem and Nabloos to find a seat there.

The country and views about me, north, east, south, west, to the far horizon, seemed sacredly familiar. And in that new atmosphere the central truth of that scene seemed yet more precious than ever. I wish that this sermon could be of as much good to some one who reads it as it has been to me in its writing and in its contemplation.

SOUL-THIRST, AND ITS QUENCHING

Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again : but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4 : 13, 14).

One of the most beautiful spots in all Palestine is that of which the ancient well of Jacob is the center, about half-way between Jerusalem and Jezreel. It is just to the east of the principal traveled road through ancient Canaan, the great caravan route from time immemorial between the Nile and the Euphrates, the highway of the nations from the far East to the ever extending West.

Beyond this highway, westward, there sweeps the valley of Shechem, between the mountains : Ebal on the north, and Gerizim on the south ; “ a valley green with grass, gray with olives, gardens sloping down on every side, fresh springs rushing down in all directions.”

Northward the snowy summit of Hermon is seen in the far distance—above the hills of Ephraim. Eastward are the hills which skirt the valley of the Jordan. Southward loom up the hills which stand round about Jerusalem.

Seventeen centuries before, the patriarch Jacob, while a sojourner in that land, had cut down a hundred feet and more through the limestone rock to the living springs below at that place, in order to secure water for his thirsting people and flocks. Other wells and streams were near, but every Oriental land-owner must have water on his own domain, in order to be secure against enemies shutting him in, or cutting off his water supply from without. And Jacob's Well has there stood ever since, with its associations so many and rich.

The well is on the northern and western edge of the extensive and fertile Plain of Mukhnâ, or "Plain of the Cornfields." That well-side is the one spot on earth where we may be sure that Jesus stood and sat and taught while he was here among men; and even then that spot was rich beyond all others with memories of the ancient days of God's peculiar people, and with associations of the world's great conquerors.

Jesus, with his disciples, was returning from Judea to his home in Galilee. Going by the direct route, instead of by the roundabout way east of the Jordan, "he must needs go through Samaria" and come near this well.

The feeling was very bitter between Jews and Samaritans. Strict Jews counted it a defilement to partake of food which a Samaritan had prepared. But Jesus was above all such prejudices of race, and when he reached this spot he sent his disciples into the Samaritan village of Sychar, a little way up the valley

of Shechem ; while he, " being wearied with his journey," sat down by the well to rest.

Many a mighty one of old, who claimed or who sought to be the ruler of the world, had halted by that well, or had passed and repassed along the highway which it was near.

Kedor-la'omer, the Elamite king from east of Babylon, made his great campaign westward for the purpose of controlling this road, and passed over it with Lot as a prisoner, when Abraham was in pursuit of him, as told in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis.

The principal kings of Egypt went this way and came again, on their marches of invasion and conquest ; from the days of Thotmes and Sety and Rameses, down to Shishak and Necho and the Ptolemies. Along it also had passed the kings of Assyria and Babylon : Tiglath-pileser, and Sennacherib, and Shalmanezer, and Nebuchadnezzar, and others.

And so, also, there had come and gone Benhadad and Hazael and Rezin of Syria, and Alexander the Great of Macedon.

Yet never had that highway of the conquerors felt the tread of so mighty a ruler, whose sway should extend so widely and continue so long, as the way-worn traveler whose tired feet rested by that well at that noon-tide hour, while his few humble followers were gone to the neighboring village to purchase bread.

While Jesus waited alone by the well, there came thither a Samaritan woman to draw water, probably

for the laborers who were at work in the great corn-fields which this well supplied. Jesus said to the woman, "Give me to drink." That was a stranger question, just then and there, than we might be inclined to suppose.

An Oriental would not, as a rule, speak to a woman in the open air; far less would he seek, through sharing a drink with a recognized alien, to make a friendly compact with her. In the East the giving and receiving a cup of cold water only is a covenant, or truce, for the time being, between even deadly enemies.

When Hormozan, a Persian ruler, surrendered to the Khaleef Omar, and was brought into the presence of his captor, he asked at once for a drink. Omar asked him if he were thirsty. "No," he said, "I only wish to drink in your presence, so that I may be sure of my life." On this, his life was assured him.

When Saladeen had defeated the Christians in Palestine, he received their two chief leaders in his tent as prisoners. The king of the Franks he seated by his side, and gave him drink cooled with snow from the Lebanon. When this king, having tasted it, offered it also to Prince Arnald, Saladeen protested, saying: "This wretch shall not drink of the water with my permission; for then there would be safety to him." Thereupon he struck off Prince Arnald's head.

No wonder, therefore, in view of this state of things, that the woman at Jacob's Well was surprised when a man of the proud Jewish nation actually condescended

to ask a drink of water from a woman of the despised Samaritan stock; and that she responded with the question:

"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

The rejoinder of the stranger Jew only puzzled her the more. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

"Living water" is water from a perennial spring, as distinct from ordinary well water, or cistern water. And "living water" is to this day, in the East, cried by the water-carrier in the crowded city streets as "The gift of God! The gift of God!"

What could this stranger traveler, without pitcher or cord, mean by the suggestion that he could better meet her thirst than she his? Wonderingly, therefore, she asked of him:

"Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?"

Then it was that Jesus uttered the words of our text, and by them caused the Samaritan woman to wonder more than before.

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I

shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst!" What a promise! What a thought! Never to thirst! Never to thirst!

No appetite or passion, no craving or desire, is so universal, so constant, so fierce, and so resistless, as thirst. Thirst was the first want of the first-born babe. Amid the awful terrors of Calvary, thirst forced an agonized cry from the lips of the dying Redeemer. The one cry that has come back to us from a spirit in torment was for a drop of water to cool a tongue parching with thirst. And one of the promises precious to the children of God is, that in heaven they shall not thirst any more.

To slake another's thirst but for a moment, is a bounty acknowledged gratefully by man, and not unnoticed by God. It was the yielding and bestowing of a cup of drink on the field of Zutphen that stands out in history as the crowning glory of Sir Philip Sidney, the peerless flower of chivalry. Says our Lord, concerning human ministries to his disciples: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. 10 : 42).

"A cup of cold water only!" One whose lips have parched with thirst in an army-prison, or on a sandy march, or while lying wounded on a field of

battle, can realize the preciousness of "a cup of cold water only" as others cannot.

After one of the battles of our Civil War, a member of the government ambulance corps was moving among the wounded on the field, assisting in their removal. He came to a dying Southern soldier, too far gone for hope through removal. As he stooped over the dying man with a kindly word, the parching lips asked for water. The lips were tenderly moistened.

"Thank you! Now please lay my cap over my face, and let me die."

As this service was rendered lovingly, there came another call from the dying man:

"Will you please tell me your name, my friend?"

"Why, of course I will; but why do you ask it?"

"Oh, so I can pray God through all eternity to bless you for giving me that water!"

To bring water for his thirst, man has poured out millions upon millions for costly aqueducts, the very ruins of which are among the world's wonders. He has bored the artesian well into depths which could never be reached by cutting. He has tunneled under the lake's bottom, miles beyond the shore, for a purer supply. He has linked the desert with the river by chains of canals.

Yet at the best, pure water has not always satisfied man's thirst; so he has searched the world over for tempting beverages, and has taxed the ingenuity of his fellows for new and refreshing drinks.

To meet their ceaseless craving for drink, men have

yielded all hope of gain and honor and health; have squandered property, made home desolate, dear ones wretched, and themselves drunkards,—miserable here, and without hope for hereafter.

Desire for drink has crowded our almshouses, and packed our jails. It has lighted the incendiary's torch, and sharpened the assassin's knife. Long, fearfully, hopelessly has the power of its curse swept the wide world. To stay its ravages, the arm of the civil law and the open hand of philanthropy have been extended to comparatively little purpose.

The longing for drink has been neither satisfied nor removed. Men still drink and thirst, and thirst and drink again. Only one person in all the world, and he that travel-worn pilgrim by the well of Jacob, has ever dared confidently to say, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

Is it, then, strange that that woman of Samaria, as she looked into those clear eyes of truth, and heard those convincing tones of sincerity, should start at the thought of the breadth and fulness of that unique declaration; and, remembering all her weary journeys to and from that well, should cry out in earnestness: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw"?

But it was the thirst of the soul, and not merely bodily thirst, that Jesus claimed power to quench; although the greater power included the lesser, and *he* was competent to both. This he proceeded to

show to the now deeply interested woman, in their further conversation.

All the greater and more precious was the wonderful promise of Jesus, as thus interpreted; for universal, persistent, fierce, and resistless as is man's bodily craving for drink, it exceeds in no degree his longing for that which shall refresh and satisfy his inner and spiritual nature.

So soon as a human soul comes to consciousness, it comes to soul-thirst. So long as the human soul exists, it must have soul-drink or be in torment. Religion is the drink of the soul. The soul craves religion as the lungs crave air. The soul is formed and fitted for the reception of religion, as the eyes are formed and fitted for the reception of light.

To satisfy their soul-thirst, men give and struggle and suffer and die. Idolaters "lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith" (Isa. 46 : 6), to secure to themselves a drinking-cup for the soul. Sages of old joined with sovereigns and with soldiers, in rearing mighty structures as drinking-places for souls that were athirst. The costliest buildings of earth have ever been those which marked the spot where thirsting souls might find refreshing.

From a love of the drink of the soul men have given up property, and honors, and home, and friends, and have gone cheerfully into prison houses or into the flames with the longing cry: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee,

O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God " (Psa. 42 : 1, 2). " My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is " (Psa. 63 : 1).

And in all the centuries since the first cry for drink went up from a thirsty soul, only one person, and he that travel-worn pilgrim by the well of Jacob, has ever dared confidently to say, concerning the soul's thirst for God: " Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Is not such a word as that worth heeding? Is not such a promise worth testing?

But is this word to be trusted? Is this promise sure? Many a word of hope has proved false; many a glad promise has failed in its testing. Is there firmer ground of confidence in this case?

Even as those who sought the quenching of their bodily thirst have found that " wine is a mocker " (Prov. 20 : 1), that " wine and new wine take away the heart " (Hos. 4 : 11), but not the thirst; even as pilgrims on the desert have perished by the brink of empty wells, where their thirst had been mocked as they came for its slaking; even as fainting travelers have been deluded by the mirage of the desert into one more vain effort to reach the water which they longed for,—even so, also, thirsting souls have been mocked with the wine of superstition, have famished at the exhausted cistern of a false religion, or have

wasted their latest strength in pursuing the mirage of some delusive philosophy of first causes and ultimate destiny.

When Philip V, of Spain, first saw in full play the magnificent new fountains he had erected at La Granja, it is said that an expression of pleasure passed over his sad face; then his melancholy look returned, and he said, bitterly: "Thou hast given me three minutes' distraction from my cares; and thou hast cost me three millions." Might not his words be spoken of many a costly fountain erected to gratify man's spiritual longings?

The ruins of such fountains dot the world over. What else are the crumbling, but still magnificent, temples at Nineveh and Nuffar, at Memphis and Thebes, at Susa and Persepolis, at Athens and Rome, at Mexico and Cuzco! Their cost was millions. Their relief to soul-thirst was momentary. "Broken cisterns" are they all, "that can hold no water" (Jer. 2 : 13).

Every deserted altar to an unknown god to-day is a shattered drinking-cup, which some famishing soul has dashed aside because of its bitter mockery of the thirst which it could not quench.

The saddest hearts in all the world to-day are those which have been disappointed in their search for that which would satisfy their spiritual longings, whose best religious experiences have been "as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath

appetite" (Isa. 29 : 8). Is there surer help in the promise of Jesus by the well of Jacob? Will his word of hope never mock or delude or fail a thirsty soul?

My friends, this is a question of fact rather than of opinion. It is to be settled by testimony, not by argument. There stands the declaration of Jesus: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

More than sixty generations of believers in Jesus have tested this promise, and are witnesses of its truth. Myriads have turned, with thirsty souls, to Jesus; never one, never one, never one has been refused or disappointed. Men and women and children who rested on this promise have gone calmly into the fires of martyrdom, and with moistened lips have sung the praises of Jesus while the flames were purifying their bodies.

Others have sorrowed on alone in life, but not as those who had no hope (1 Thess. 4 : 13). They have been "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; . . . perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4 : 8, 9). They have been "as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6 : 9, 10).

Many of you here before me are also witnesses of these things. You could rise up, one by one, and say in grateful confidence :

“ I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘ Behold, I freely give
The living water ; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live ! ’
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream ;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in him.” ¹

Every one of you here is thus satisfied in Christ ; or you are athirst in your soul, and you will be until you test this promise of Jesus.

My friends, I have been over many a battle-field of life, and I have seen Christian soldiers in many a hard fight. I have seen many wounded ones among them, and many dying ones ; but I never saw one such disciple thirsting hopelessly.

I have seen strange sights, and heard strange words, in the world. I have seen brother arrayed against brother, husband against wife, parent against child. I have heard fathers curse the sons who had dishonored their names, and sons and daughters speak bitter words against the mothers who bore them. But I never yet saw a disciple of Jesus whom the word of Jesus had failed. I never yet heard one say that he had drunk of the water which Jesus proffers and not had his soul-thirst quenched.

¹ Horatius Bonar.

Let me tell you a single incident out of my army experience, as illustrative of the truth I am emphasizing. It was in July, 1863. While a prisoner in the city of Charleston, I was paroled for a time from the common jail, that I might minister to our wounded soldiers, brought up from before Fort Wagner, on Morris Island, to the Yankee Hospital, which was the old slave-pen on Queen Street.

The surgeons' tables in that hospital were in the court, in the rear of a high brick building, where the wounded men were lying before and after their operations. When brought in, the men were laid on loose straw on the lower floors. After treatment they were laid on rude cots on the floors above.

They could not all be attended to promptly; and on Tuesday morning some of them were still lying with the blood unwashed from their wounds of Saturday night. It was the middle of July. The heat of the weather was added to the loss of blood in intensifying the thirst of the poor sufferers.

My mission was to carry water, in canteens, from the hydrant in the courtyard to the different floors of the building, to pour it upon those who were thirsting. I was sure of a welcome in this mission; for with the water I could bring unlooked-for sympathy from a Union chaplain to those dear, brave, uncomplaining, suffering soldiers.

As I was passing along on the upper floor of that slave-pen hospital, a Confederate surgeon, pointing to a cot, said:

"Chaplain, there's a little fellow who is sinking rapidly. He'll not live many hours. I think you'd better talk with him."

On that prompting, I turned to the "little fellow" on the cot. He was a fair-faced, bright-eyed New England lad, barely eighteen years old. He had lost a leg, and was sinking from the shock. When I told him who I was, he greeted me cheerily.

"You are very badly wounded," I said.

"Oh, not so very badly," he responded. "I've only lost one leg; and a good many men have lost both, and got well."

"I wish *you* were to get well," I said, shaking my head sadly.

"Why, Chaplain," he said, evidently startled by my look and tone, "you don't mean that I'm going to die, do you?"

"Yes, my dear boy, I mean just that."

"Oh, but, Chaplain, I can't die. I'm only a boy yet, and I can't die."

"My dear boy, I wish I could give you life; but the doctor says you must die."

"But, Chaplain, I'm not ready to die."

"Jesus Christ can make you ready—to live or to die, if you'll just put yourself in his hands."

"Oh, but, Chaplain, I've been a very wicked boy. I was a bad boy at home; although I had a real good home. I've got a real good father and mother up in New Hampshire; but I ran away from them and enlisted; and in the army I've been just as bad as I could be."

"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and he loves to have those who have been bad come to him to be saved. You can come to him now as a sinner, and ask him to forgive you and save you; and he will do it gladly."

"Well, will you pray for me, Chaplain?"

"Of course I will," I said; and I kneeled by his bedside, and prayed with and for him in loving earnestness. Then, after a few words more with him, I turned to other sufferers, promising to come and see him again.

After a little I came back to his bedside.

"I've been looking back, Chaplain," he said, "and its all black, all black."

"Then don't look *back*," I said; "but look *up*. It's all bright there."

"But you don't know, Chaplain, how great a sinner I've been."

"I don't care to know. Jesus knows. And you can't have been so great a sinner as he is great a Saviour. He is ready to save to the uttermost them who come unto God by him."

"Do you mean, Chaplain, that right now Jesus will forgive all my sins if I ask him to?"

"I mean just that."

"Well, Chaplain, won't you pray for me again?"

"Yes, my boy, I'll pray for you; but I want you to pray for yourself. Jesus loves to have those who need forgiveness come and ask for it themselves."

Once more I kneeled and prayed. As I finished

my prayer, I laid my hand tenderly on him, and said, "Now *you* pray."

The little fellow folded his hands across his chest, and prayed,—prayed in such childlike simplicity and trust, told so frankly to Jesus the story of his sins, and asked in such loving confidence for forgiveness, that I was sure his prayer was answered while it was offering, and that another thirsty soul was being refreshed with the water that Jesus gives.

As I arose from my knees, I saw that we were not alone. That childlike prayer, in that childlike voice, had drawn the attention of surgeons, nurses, and visitors, in the prison-hospital, and they stood about us, listening in tearful sympathy.

A third time, after a brief absence, I was by that soldier lad. His eyes were closed. His face was very pale. At first I thought he had already passed away, and I stooped over him to find if he were still breathing. Seeming to feel my presence, he opened his eyes, and for a moment looked up vacantly. Then, as full consciousness returned, he recognized me with an "Oh, it's you, Chaplain!" and throwing up both his arms he clasped them about my neck, and drew my face down to his to give me a dying kiss.

"You are the best friend I've got in the world," he said. "You've saved my soul."

"No, no, my dear boy," I said tenderly. "Jesus saves your soul."

"Yes, yes; but you've told me about Jesus; and *he's* saved my soul. He has, Chaplain; I don't have any

doubt about it. He has forgiven all my sins. And now I'm going to be with him. Oh, how happy my father and mother will be. I want you to write and tell them all about it."

And it was while I stood listening to the joyous words of that forgiven sinner that I was tapped on the shoulder, and summoned away under arrest as a spy, to be shut in solitary prison confinement, never to see that dear boy again until he and I stand together in our Saviour's presence.

As I recall that hospital incident out of the dark memories of my army-prison life, it seems to me that when I went to that wounded soldier's cot, carrying water for the moistening of his fevered lips, He who sat by the well of Jacob said of that which I had to proffer to the suffering boy:

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

And that word of promise was then and there made good, as it always will be to one who tests its truth.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isa. 55 : 1). "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. . . . And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22 : 17).

GAIN OF GODLINESS

III

GAIN OF GODLINESS

Even in my army life I often had occasion to preach the same truth at different times to very different audiences. In such ways a subject would grow on me by its being looked at in different lights and under different circumstances; and I trust that I grew under the influence of the subject. I rarely wanted to preach once on a subject, without wanting to preach on that subject more than once. And each time that I repeated a sermon, its subject seemed more important and suggestive than I had ever before seen it to be. Fresh phases of the main truth presented themselves, and I wanted to press them freshly on others. New illustrations were given to enforce the truth declared.

For some months in 1863 I was with my regiment on Seabrook Island, in connection with the prolonged siege of Charleston. It was wearisome waiting in inaction, and it was necessary to strive more than in times of active service to keep officers and men up to a proper moral and spiritual standard. In this line of endeavor, I preached a sermon on "The Gain of Godliness," or the practical profitableness of right-doing.

Not many weeks after this I was taken prisoner on Morris Island, and was shut up in Charleston jail. Thence I was taken to Columbia jail, where I was confined with various officers from our army and navy. Being permitted to preach there on Sundays, I preached on the same subject to a different audience, and with an increased interest in the subject. After my release from the army prison, I preached a third time about it in St. Augustine, Florida. And yet later, after the close of the war, I found pleasure in re-writing and re-preaching sermons on the important theme that had kept its growing hold on me. In the later form, as a growth from its "Seabrook Island" germ, I now include it with the others.

I preached this sermon on one occasion before the students of Amherst College. More than thirty years afterwards I met, one summer at the Isles of Shoals, a gentleman who was Professor of Greek in the Boston Latin School. He referred to this sermon, which he had heard as an undergraduate in Amherst. He repeated the text and the opening sentences of my sermon, and he gave the main points and some of the illustrations of the sermon. Yet for years before he thus reminded me of it I had not thought of the sermon. I then looked it up, revised and re-preached it, and it is in this shape that it is now given.

PROFIT OF GODLINESS

Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Tim. 4 : 8).

Godliness is *profitable*. Well, if godliness is profitable, godliness ought to be attractive. Men want a share in almost anything that gives promise of being profitable. Men will work in a powder mill or a dynamite factory, will handle nitro-glycerin or live electric wires, if it seems profitable to do so. Men will work under ground in a coal mine or a sewer, or will stand above ground in the light without working; they will "strike" for higher wages, and then keep on persistently in the fight, or submit and go back at the old rates, as the one course or the other *appears* to be profitable—whether it proves so or not.

If it promises to be profitable, men will start for the Klondike or the Philippines in the autumn, in the face of famine or freezing; or they will take a seat in a balloon—with a circus performer, or with a man of science, for the next town or for the North Pole. In the hope of finding it profitable, men will manufacture rum or will sell it, will buy lottery tickets, or gamble in stocks, or bet on an election, or a horse-race, or a

game of football. Burglars will rob a bank, and sometimes bank directors will make terms with the burglars—compound a felony—if it bids fair to be profitable.

Politicians will say or do almost anything,—take double pay, or give back what they have taken; vote to increase appropriations, or to reduce allowances; favor gold or silver or currency, or all three together, as the standard of values; approve or denounce civil service reform; work to send a party leader to the penitentiary or to the national capital; or talk one way and vote another,—according to the prospect of profitableness in so doing.

Most of the hard work, and the folly, and the crime of the world are the result of the desire to do what is profitable. No such question as, Is it pleasant? or, Is it easy? or, Is it right? bears comparison, in potency and universal application in the business of everyday life, with the question, Is it profitable? When, therefore, the sure word of God calls attention to a thing as “profitable,” it ought to have the ears of everybody; for whatever is really profitable we all want to know about.

But *what* does God’s word say is profitable? “Godliness is profitable.” Godliness is God-likeness, being like God, being and doing as God would have us to be and to do. Jesus Christ showed in his life what it is to be godly, to be God-like. His example is a guide for our conduct if we would have godliness; and such godliness is, we are assured, profitable. Godliness,

as right being and right doing, is declared to be profitable. Profitable unto *what*? Profitable how far? Profitable unto *all* things. That is the assurance. It could not be more sweeping,—“unto all things;” no limitations of any sort,—unto the uttermost, unto all things.

There are many investments which pay in some things, but not in others. Mere “bodily exercise,” the Bible tells us in this very connection, “profiteth” a “little.” Bicycling and golf have their profitability in their spheres. Eating and drinking, riding and walking, sleeping and waking, talking and reading, are profitable in their way at their time. A good tailor or milliner may be profitable in the department of becoming dress. Making guns and cartridges is a profitable business in war-time or in days of labor riots; so is the manufacture of coffins in a season of pestilence. Having “a good time” seems more profitable to a “fast” youth over night than it does the next morning. Living for wealth, or pleasure, or fame, or knowledge, or human love, looks profitable in some aspects of life and for the passing hour; but no one of these things, nor all these together, can be called profitable unto “all things.”

Only God can give a promise for all things. *He* says that “godliness”—God-serving, right being and doing—“is profitable unto all things.” Who would not have a share in such an investment?

But when are these dividends payable? How soon do the returns of godliness as an investment come in?

The text gives a plain answer to these questions. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of *the life that now is.*" That is encouraging. The life that now is is an important life to all of us. It is the only life that we know much about practically; and it is the life that most of us feel most interest in. We should be sorry to have no reward in this life for our best doing and being while it is passing.

It requires faith and courage and patience to make an investment of one's powers and possessions in an enterprise that gives no promise or hope of any return in one's lifetime. A proffer of that sort would not be attractive to the average man. Yet God's appeals are to the average man, as well as to those above and to those below the average. God does not ask those who toil for him to wait until another life for their best gains. His service gives "promise of the life that now is."

No earthly service pays more surely or more promptly than God's service. The right way through this life is the best way in this life. Living so as to fit one's self for a higher life pays better here and now than any other kind of living. Even if there were no hereafter, a man would be the gainer here by right being and right doing,—by "godliness." The matter-of-fact world admits this when it says, "Honesty is the best policy." Integrity is always safest for a man. God's laws govern not only the highest interests but the lowest. His "commandment is exceeding broad" (Psa. 119 : 96).

If a man wants good health, good looks, good temper; if he seeks pleasure, comfort, happiness; if he longs for friendship, love, fame; if he is a lawyer, a physician, an editor, a student, a teacher, a banker, a merchant, a manufacturer, a railroad man, a mechanic, a day laborer, or a gentleman of elegant leisure (if there is such a man); in whatever line he works, or strives, or loafs, or lives, he can best hope for success in the line of God's service and God's laws,—in practical "godliness." In that line there is good reward; in any other line there is poor reward. "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner" (Prov. 11 : 31). Godliness is profitable in this life. Ungodliness is not profitable in this life, even when it pays big dividends.

1. If a man would be in best physical condition, he must bring his body under the behests of godliness, as to self-control and abstinence and purity.

"Every man that striveth for the mastery," says Paul, "is temperate [is self-controlled] in all things" (1 Cor. 9 : 25),—puts himself for the time being under godly restraints, in order to obtain some of the profits of godliness. Paul said this to the Corinthians, who in his day had a special interest in athletics, and who knew all that was to be known about them. His statement of fact is as true in our day as it was in his.

Lovers of indulgence may prate as they please

about the enjoyableness and healthfulness of a glass of whisky or wine, or a mug of beer, or a refreshing pipe or cigar, but if they were put in training for a boat-race, or for track athletics, or for the highest feats of muscular strength and endurance of nerve in any sphere, they would have to give up stimulants and narcotics, and whatever would tend to weaken or defile a man.

Men who have made the training and development of the human body their study, and who have money and reputation at stake on the condition of those whom they train, insist on a pure and abstemious life for those whom they are aiding to "strive for the mastery" in a coming contest, even if they themselves are slaves to sensualism. The captain of a Yale boat crew met one of his oarsmen on the street while they were training for a race. "Joe," he said, "you've got a quid of tobacco in your mouth. That won't do. Spit it out. You can't chew tobacco, and row in this race. We can't afford to have you." That captain did not speak as a puritan, but as an athlete.

Even keen-eyed gamblers, forecasting the issue of a prize-fight, are too knowing to stake their money on a man who has not put himself in "good condition" by practicing in the ways of godliness for a time, so far as his body is concerned, in regard to rum and tobacco and impurity. Foolish boys may not believe this, but wise and observing men do.

Experience shows that a man's best physical condition is attained through purity and uprightness—in the

realm of godliness. Strength and good looks are prompted by well-doing. Vice scars the face, and disfigures the outer man.

“Who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine” (Prov. 23 : 29, 30).

Not only red eyes, but sallow faces, and shrunk limbs, and failing health, of older and younger wrongdoers on every side, bear testimony anew to the truth of the inspired declaration that, “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Cor. 3 : 17). Godliness is profitable to man physically.

2. He who would be in best intellectual shape has to conform to the requirements of a godly life, so as thereby to secure peace of mind, a clear and steady purpose, with highest fitness for the mental duties of his busy present.

Worry kills more than work. All realize that remorse is an enemy to repose. Proverbially, “a good conscience gives a soft pillow.” “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isa. 57 : 20, 21). How many times have we seen that inspired declaration verified!

The young man who has passed his evening or night in dissipation is not worth as much in his studies or at his business the next day. The clerk who has defrauded his employers cannot fill his place as well as while he was yet innocent, even though he is not

suspected of wrong-doing. Crime can be covered up from others, but God and the guilty man know it; and it so struggles for expression that it tortures the heart which is striving to hold it in, until insanity or suicide is often a result. A guilt-crippled conscience forbids the freest working of any living man's intellect. At the best, the man is not what he might be, or what he was while he followed the more formal demands of a godly life.

The doctor who will lie to his patients loses in large measure the power to help his patients by speaking the truth convincingly. The merchant or the clerk who misrepresents his goods is not the best salesman. If a knave is not always a fool, he is always more or less foolish. "The devil always leaves a pair of bars down," is the world's adage, in view of the sure folly of him who is a rascal. In no place is a thoroughly godless man a well-balanced man intellectually. He is not sure to do the best thing for his own interest.

As a politician, he is liable to mistake the temper of the public he would please, especially where moral issues are at stake. As a speculator, he cannot rightly read the signs of the times, outside of his own sphere of thought and action. As a sharper, he can hardly fail to overreach himself in his plans to cheat others. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin" (Prov. 5 : 22). "Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner" (Prov. 13 : 6).

One of the biggest-brained men of the last century in the United States failed to evidence his greatness, or to fill any place for which his intellect fitted him, simply through his lack of that measure of godliness which would enable him to see the advantages of a conscience and the practical power of righteousness. He was governor of a state, a member of Congress, a cabinet officer, a foreign minister; he was nominated for chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; and yet he never commanded a high degree of respect. Most of you before me now, all of the younger generation, would not even recall his name if it were given. The answer as to why he fell short of true greatness, was always, "He only lacked a conscience. He was without godliness, and therefore he was a failure."

Among the poorest men on earth to-day,—men who feel poor, and whose poverty bears down on them,—are godless men with large bank accounts and no comfort-giving fund of godliness. While they can get whatever money can buy, they must lack mental stimulus, mental nourishment, and mental health, which cannot be bought with money, nor secured or retained without a measure of godliness.

The richest men in the world are men with little money, but with godly lives and contented spirits; for "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). Men who live for self never succeed in satisfying self, or in quite satisfying anybody else. Men who live for others, in Godlike unselfishness,

have joy themselves while giving joy to others. In every sphere, higher or lower, the man of ripest culture, and the man of smallest mental furnishing, has no real profit in life or its occupations without godliness of purpose and conduct. And in every one of these spheres, "godliness is profitable" to man's intellectual being, in the life that now is.

3. In his good name and reputation, as in his bodily wholeness and his mental vigor, a man is the gainer through godliness, through a life conformed to God's laws.

"A good name is rather to be chosen"—for the life that now is—"than great riches" (Prov. 22 : 1), and the only sure basis of a good name is integrity—or godliness. A man, young or old, may deceive others for a time as to his real character, and as to the reputation he ought to bear, but in the long run he will come to be rated at his true value.

He may hide temporarily a rent in the fabric of life he is weaving, but the time must come when the piece is unrolled in the light, and all its imperfections stand out clearly. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops" (Luke 12 : 2, 3).

A good name, a reputation for integrity and godliness, is valued not merely among the goodly, but

among those who could not claim it for themselves, and who might not seem to care for it in anybody. The merchant who cheats his customers does not want his clerks to cheat him. A band of robbers would want an honest treasurer.

Boys who are beginning to smoke, or drink, or gamble, or swear, or go to vile resorts, would be startled if they knew with what censure or contempt they are looked down at by those whose vices they are imitating,—they thinking that they are only forward or manly. Boys, on the other hand, who seem to shut themselves off from good companionship, and to be open to the charge of puritanical strictness, might be encouraged if they understood how warmly their better course is commended by those who do far differently.

I recall a captain in the army, in war time,—the Civil War, I mean,—who was dissolute, foul spoken, a gambler, a drunkard. He scoffed at religion, and reviled its representatives. Yet when his colonel asked him to name men of his company for promotion, he sent into headquarters three names, saying in favor of the first two on the list, that they did not draw their whisky rations and would not play cards. He could drink and gamble recklessly himself; but he did not want to trust the lives and interests of a corporal's squad of his men with a man of like practices, if he could find a purer man to lead them. The reputation of godliness is profitable even among bad men.

There is no place in this country where godliness—

in other men—has a higher market value than among the money-changers, and the stock and wheat and sugar gamblers, of Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia. One reason why so many unprincipled men go among money-changers, or apply for positions of trust, making a show of godliness, and then stealing all they can lay their hands on, is because the reputation of godliness is valued so highly both by the godly and by the godless. Other things being equal, a man can command a higher price for his services in any profession, in any line of business, in any sphere of influence or action, if, besides his special capability for the place, he is known or supposed to have the added qualification of godliness.

In view of this fact, and of the truth that a man's real worth is sure to be known sooner or later, it may safely be said that a man—young or old—never departs from the line of godliness, never does wrong wittingly, never lowers his moral tone or standard, without lessening correspondingly his power and his reputation for well doing and well being in his best sphere.

Whatever other qualifications a man possesses, if he be destitute of godliness, if he does not conform to God's requirements for everyday conduct in the present existence, he is at a disadvantage in any honest business or proper profession, alongside of another man equally competent who is godly ; for the inspired declaration of our text is reiterated and freshly verified in the world's experience day by day.

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

The life "which is to come." "Having promise of the life which is to come." It would be sad if godliness gave no promise for the life which is to come, but limited its blessings to the life which is.

The highest rewards of the best earthly service are commonly in the future. Only on the lowest plane of humanity will a man toil merely for his daily expenses, living literally "from hand to mouth," with no thought of accumulating profits for use and enjoyment hereafter.

The nobler man is always looking ahead. Whatever he is doing now, he expects to be doing something better by and by. He confidently counts on a steady increase of his wages, and acquirements, and honors. He would, in fact, be worth little for now if he did not have some hope for the future. A youth is not content to be always the errand boy, or the apprentice, or the farm hand, or the clerk, or the freshman. He hopes to rise, and to make progress continually.

Those places of business or of professional occupation in our large cities which are most sought after by enterprising and ambitious young men, are places which proffer little or no pay to beginners, but which are supposed to fit those who learn and grow for service in spheres of gain, of influence, and of reputation, in after life. That "which is to come," even in the

present life, is always counted, by the thoughtful and aspiring man, more important, better worth living for, than the best possessions of the present.

A college or university life has its profit and advantages to a student, in its associations and companionships and opportunities while he is still an undergraduate; but the best thing that a young man learns while he is an undergraduate is how to learn in higher spheres when he has graduated. It is not the knowledge itself that he gets, but it is the learning how to get and use more knowledge, that is his real gain. And this truth has its application in every phase of the life that now is.

Years ago our National Sunday-school Convention, which first arranged for our system of International Bible Lessons, was held in Indianapolis. It was a delightful gathering. Before its adjournment, representative delegates were invited to speak closing words to those who for three days had enjoyed sweet counsel together. Robert Magill, from Belfast, Ireland, with true Irish wit and keenness said to us:

"They say that this convention is closing; but I think that it is just beginning now that it is ending; and there'll be more of it after it's done with, than while it was going on."

That is a truth as to everything that is worth doing in this world, or that is being done well: there will be more of it after it is done with, than while it was going on. God be praised that this is so.

To God's children everywhere the best is always

ahead. Those who yield to the drawings of God's love, and seek to be conformed to his image and to the likeness of his Son in true godliness, can be sure that much as they have had of enjoyment and profit in the past, or now have in the present, they are to have more in the future,—the best is still to come. It is so in "the life that now is," and it is so in the life "which is to come."

Of the life after death, every man has more or less thought, and every man wants to receive good in that life. He is willing, indeed, to say or to do some things now in the hope that it will yet be found to have been a profitable investment. There are few men who do not at times deny to themselves some pleasure or gratification, or perform some service for others, or make some gift to a good cause, with this hope in mind. And this is, so far as it goes, commendable. Even an unjust steward would have the sense to look ahead for his own selfish interests, and that forethought would have divine approval so far.

But the truth that men generally do not recognize, and that many a child of God fails to appreciate at its fullest, is the truth declared in our text, that the life that is most profitable for now is the life which has largest promise for the hereafter. The life that is, and the life that is to be, are under the one God—"the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13 : 8); and godliness, or God-likeness, or oneness with God in Christ, hath "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." There is but

one standard for us to conform to in our secular and in our religious life.

Professor Henry Drummond, who was familiar with Christianity and heathenism, and who had thought much of both the natural world and the spiritual, of the life that is and of that which is to come, said that even if he were satisfied that every one of the heathen would be saved without a knowledge of Christianity, that fact would not lessen in the slightest degree his personal interest in the cause of Christian missions; for he wanted all the heathen to have the advantage in this life of what only Christ and Christianity could give them. He realized that the character and conduct which gave sure promise for the life that is to come, are the very best—the only ones really worth having—for the life that now is.

That, in fact, is what our text assures us. The course which has higher reward in the life that now is, is the very course which has highest reward in the life which is to come. If there were to be no life beyond this, we could not do better here and now than to do as we should do if we had the hereafter always in our thoughts.

I once knew a devoted home missionary who lived always near to God, and who seemed always happy in being with men and in doing for them. The life that is, and the life that is to come, were ever together in his mind. He could hardly speak of one without speaking of the other. As he came down from his room in the morning, he would tell gratefully of his

good night's sleep; he would welcome gratefully the new day; he would refer gratefully to his pleasant surroundings; and then he would say gratefully, as if summing all together, "All this, and heaven besides." That's the way to live! that's the way to feel!

So it comes to pass that he who is best fitted for the duties and enjoyments of this life is therewith best fitted for the duties and enjoyment of heaven. He who can have joy in the eternal hereafter, has joy in every passing day. He who is not a submissive, trustful child of God, following in the path of duty in true godliness, in true Christ-likeness, is not fully fitted to work on a farm, to be a clerk, to do business for himself, to study, to be married or to live single, or, in fact, to do any good thing anywhere to best advantage. But he who is God's obedient, trustful child, doing and being just what God would have him be and do, can be made most effective and have most joy in his proper earthly sphere here and now, and he shall have gladness and power forevermore; for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

UNIVERSAL LONGING FOR JESUS

IV

UNIVERSAL LONGING FOR JESUS

My army-prison life in Columbia, South Carolina, called on me for fresh and earnest work as a chaplain, even with all its limitations and drawbacks. My only book for study was my little pocket-Bible ; but I found that Bible more suggestive than ever. I had available no notes of previous study to aid me in my preaching ; but souls were there for whom I felt responsibility, and what they showed of their needs constantly appealed to me.

I conducted a service of worship, with preaching, every Sunday morning in our officers' quarters. Then, by special permission, I went out into the jail-yard, to preach to the army privates and navy sailors who were prisoners there. Standing on the jail steps, as I talked to the soldiers and sailors before me in the yard, a Confederate officer stood by me to note my words. A Confederate soldier also, with rifle and fixed bayonet, stood by my side to keep me within bounds. These things did not promote freedom of utterance ; yet they did tend to intensify my feeling on the theme of my preaching. Talks with fellow-prisoners, officers and men, about my subject

of preaching, gave me new points of view and promptings to fresh words. Hence my Columbia life was, in a sense, fruitful of sermon-themes. I gained from it, even if no one else did.

Having preached there on soul-thirst and its satisfying, I was led to preach on another phase of the same great subject, while pointing out the universal longing for that which only Jesus can supply. Reading the first chapter of Mark's Gospel, I found a passage which emphasized this truth. That gave me a new sermon-theme. After I was released from prison, I preached again on that subject before my regiment in St. Augustine, and thus again and again as the subject grew on me, and as, I trust, I grew in appreciation of the important theme.

One of the later growths from that fruitful germ is here given,

ALL MEN SEEK JESUS

*And when they had found him, they said unto him,
All men seek for thee (Mark 1 : 37).*

“All men seek for thee!” Seek for whom? Seek for Jesus of Nazareth, the new Prophet of Galilee, the mighty Wonder-worker, the matchless Physician.

The son of Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, who for thirty years had lived a quiet and humble life in that Galilean village, suddenly, while away from his home, had been pointed out by the greatest prophet and preacher of the day as God’s peculiar representative among men, Israel’s Messiah, for whom an expectant world was waiting. Then, while men looked and wondered, this Jesus began to preach and to teach, and to do mighty works of healing and helping. His fame spread abroad, in Jerusalem and Judea, and in Galilee and Samaria; and his old neighbors and townspeople heard of him with amazement. His name was on all lips. The cures wrought by him were beyond all that had been known before.

After an absence for a season from his new home in Capernaum, Jesus came back to that city by the sea, and was seen and heard in its synagogue on the

sabbath day. He spoke with marvelous power. He cast out an unclean spirit from a man demon-possessed. And from the synagogue he went into the home of Peter, and raised up to full health the mother of his disciple Peter's wife, by a touch and a word. Capernaum thrilled with the wonderful story of this wonderful man. "And at even, when the sun did set,"—when the close of the sacred day permitted the necessary work involved,—“they brought unto him all that were diseased,”—in Capernaum,—“and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils” (Mark 1 : 32-34). When the night shut in, Jesus ceased for a time his work of healing, and sought in sleep the rest he needed.

This ministry of good to needy men was costly work for Jesus. All loving service for God or man is expensive to the doer. Jesus never gave a healing touch, or spoke a sympathizing word, or looked a loving look, without an outgiving of his innermost self in the act, and a drain, or a strain, of his God-given forces. And he who was made flesh, in order that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, or weaknesses, became wearied, and must find refreshment in sleep in the intervals of toil, that he might gain new strength for new works of love.

While Jesus slept in his Capernaum resting-place, many who could not sleep, for pain or for deferred hope, watched anxiously, with heavy eyes and aching

hearts, for the coming dawn, when they might come, or be borne, again into the presence of the mighty Healer, with their plea to him for help and health.

As for him, his mission was not to them alone, nor was it for the mere cure of bodily disorders. "In the [early] morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1 : 35). Before a new day of toil should begin, Jesus must have fresh communion with his Father in heaven, and gain fresh strength from above for the fresh outgiving of himself to others. Therefore he rose this early to pray.

Meanwhile the surging crowd of sufferers in Capernaum clamored for him at the door of Simon. "And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee."

Did the disciples of Jesus realize the truth they uttered in that morning hour in Capernaum? Do we ourselves realize it, in its magnitude and force, as we repeat those words here to-day? "All men seek for thee," Jesus of Nazareth!

Jesus of Nazareth was Jesus the Christ,—the Christ in the promise of whose coming the first sinning man was comforted, and to whom the last of our race must still look as the only source of hope; the Messiah whom the prophets in all ages had foretold, and whose praises the psalmists had sung; the Saviour whose earthly advent was the grand central fact in the history of the universe, heralded as it was by the

Angel of the Lord, and rejoiced over by all the
"multitude of the heavenly host."

"For him swung back the starry bound;
Deepened far up the great profound;
All heaven swept outward at his birth,
And naught was narrow but the earth."¹

Ah! it was truer far than the disciples knew, that *all* men were seeking or were longing for Jesus, as he prayed that morning in the solitary place near Capernaum. All, everywhere, throughout this sin-cursed and sorrow-burdened world; hearts heavy with a sense of guilt and grief and sad forebodings, longing for pardon and purity and peace, needing sympathy and comfort and help, aspiring to better things, unsatisfied with what was already theirs, and craving fuller, truer life for themselves and for theirs; all, all were vainly, vaguely reaching out after that which Jesus, and only Jesus, could meet and supply; even though the whisper of his precious name had never fallen on their ears.

And to-day, as then, all, everywhere, are seeking Jesus; not in every instance seeking him intelligently or consciously, but seeking him, at least instinctively and very really, in that they have wants which he alone can satisfy; and that they are craving constantly that fulness which it hath pleased the Father should dwell in him.

This is the truth which I would impress upon you all to-day.

¹ Louisa Bushnell.

1. Even the heathen, in distant lands where no Christian missionary has ever preached of Jesus, are seeking him to-day; and they cannot be satisfied without him.

Every heart is human, and every human heart is formed and framed with the capacity of aspiration after God, and of the recognition of his likeness when it is presented to them. Jesus was the Desire of all nations before he was born in the manger of Bethlehem. He came to meet an already existing universal need. The wise men of the East, who came seeking him before they had seen him, were representative of all the outside nations of the earth. And every heathen soul, everywhere, is seeking still the Desire of all nations, with an instinctive longing,—as the helpless new-born babe seeks, in his unconscious cry, the food of nature; or as the parched lips, in the delirium of fever, seek the cool water that the wandering intellect cannot ask for.

They are seeking him in that they need him, and that they crave the results of his redemption. Their every breath of spiritual want is really a soul-aspiration after oneness with him in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2 : 9). God be praised, that man, created in his Maker’s likeness, has not, even in his ruin, lost utterly a yearning for restored communion with the divine Father through his only begotten Son !

Even human love and sympathy and help are sought by those who never knew them. If you have

ever visited among the outcast, or have been much in the rescue homes of the slums when new little ones were brought in there, you have seen no sight sadder than that of neglected children, with pinched faces, dull eyes, and shrinking frames, who have never seen a look of love, nor heard a word of tenderness, nor felt a kindly touch; but who, with all their heavy, aching hearts, are longing for that which they have never yet experienced.

I can never forget the incident which first impressed this truth upon my soul. It was more than fifty years ago. I was in a city mission school as a visitor. The school was in a dingy garret, in an old building by the riverside. A few teachers, and a score or so of ragged boys and girls from the wretched homes of the wretched neighborhood, were gathered there. As I sat, looking on with curiosity and wonder,—for such a sight was new to me,—I saw a boy, all by himself in a corner, more wretched looking, if possible, than any of his fellows. Dirty, ragged, dull and heavy, he seemed scarcely human. His face was badly swollen, as from an inflamed tooth, so as to twist his eyes out of shape; and he sat listlessly, taking no note of what was going on.

As I watched him, he was trying clumsily to adjust about his face a ragged, filthy bandage that had fallen from its place. Touched with pity, I stepped across the room, and taking the bandage from his hands, with a kindly word to him, I folded it anew, passed it about his swollen cheek, and fastened it above his

head. As, with another expression of sympathy, I took away my hands, that little fellow turned up his distorted face to mine with a look I had never seen the like of before, but having once seen, I could never forget.

It was a look of surprise and wonder, and half joy, half question, as if a result of an utterly new experience in his weary young life. It seemed to say, "What is all this? No hand was ever before laid on me except in roughness or anger. I have learned to shrink and groan and suffer; but until now I have never known a touch of tenderness or sympathy. Yet how good it is! This, I suppose, is what I've been longing for."

That one look was everything to me. It helped to shape my new life-course. And it was the means of that boy's saving. Jesus had sent me there to do just that, and the boy was thus helped to find the Saviour he had before been seeking unconsciously. I have never doubted since then that every needy soul is seeking Jesus.

Look at the forms of the world's religions, outside of Christianity, to-day. Every one of them shows a seeking after that which Jesus gives, while no one of them proffers a substitute for him as a Saviour. Brahmanism emphasizes the spirituality of God, but it shows no method of approach to the primal Source of all good. Boodhism teaches the wretchedness of sin-cursed man, but it knows no possibility of his redemption. Zoroastrianism tells of a ceaseless

conflict between good and evil, but it points to no spiritual helper of man in his struggle. Confucianism presents the primal perfection of man as an ideal of aspiration, but it leaves man to toil on toward this ideal unaided and hopeless. So on through all the false or faulty religions, ruder or more refined. Every outpouring of blood in sacrifice to idol or to fetish is the proffer of substitute life, and the expression of a longing for a common life with Deity; and every pilgrimage, or penance, or act of devotion in any form, is another indication of the human soul's outreaching for that peace which is found in Christ, and nowhere else in the universe.

Oh, the cravings of heathen humanity for that which Jesus proffers to all the world to-day! Oh, the "groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8 : 26) in heathen hearts groping in darkness after him who "brought life and immortality to light" (2 Tim. 1 : 10) in his gospel! God hasten the glad day when to Jesus shall be given "the heathen for" an "inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for" a "possession" (Psa. 2 : 8); when "all the ends of the earth" will look to him as the Saviour, and "be satisfied . . . with" his "likeness" (Psa. 17 : 15). What are we doing to bring that day's dawn?

2. Meanwhile, not only the heathen, but all who in Christian lands are without Christ, or who are not in Christ, are seeking him.

If the heathen who have never heard of Jesus are

his seekers, much more are they, in any land, who have known of what he proffers, and who have seen the influence of his life in the words and ways of his followers. Every man wants moral wholeness, and knows that he lacks it. None stand complete except in Jesus (Col. 2 : 10). Those who would be whole, are really seekers after him who alone can make them so. They may conceal their seeking from others; they may even refuse to admit it to themselves; but because their hearts are human, their hearts need, and at times long after, fulness and peace and rest in Christ.

Ah! if all breasts were open to the gaze of all, it would be seen that many a seemingly placid bosom covers a troubled conscience and an aching heart, and that many a soul supposed to be unconcerned, and at ease in a Christless life, is in a restless turmoil of impulse and indecision. Some of you who hear me now know how my words fit your own case, even though your seat-mate has no thought of this.

Said a soldier to me, as we talked together of his soul's welfare in my tent before Richmond in war-time: "I'm a very strange man, Chaplain! Now that I'm talking with you, I realize the truth of all you say, and I'm not a hypocrite in agreeing to it all.

"But I'll go out from your tent, and it'll not be an hour before I've forgotten all about this talk, and am just as wicked and as wild as ever. And I'll not think of religion again until, perhaps, I'm on guard some night. Then, when I'm all by myself, and the

camp is quiet, as I'm pacing back and forth on my beat, it will all come over me again, and I'll see just what a sinner I am, and how like a fool I've acted; and I'll resolve that, if only I live until morning, I'll be a very different man. And I'll think that way until the 'relief' comes 'round, and I go to the guard quarters again.

"And then, will you believe it, Chaplain? it'll not be five minutes before I'm swearing or scoffing as if I'd never had a serious thought in my life. O Chaplain! I'm a very strange man, sir; a very strange man."

Was that man, after all, so very strange and singular? Did you never know anything like that in another man's experience?

There are, it is true, some persons who fail to recognize, or who refuse to admit, the outreaching of their souls for Jesus, until they are in direst peril or distress. But they are seekers *then*, if not before.

"Do you ever pray, my friend?" I asked of a wounded soldier in the prison hospital in Charleston. "Sometimes, Chaplain," he answered. "I prayed last Saturday night, when we were in that fight at Wagner. I guess everybody prayed *then*."

Yes, everybody prays at one time or another. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come,"—if not in hope and faith, then in fear and despair.

" 'There is no God,' the foolish saith,
But none 'There is no sorrow,'
And nature oft the cry of faith
In bitter need will borrow :

Eyes, which the preacher could not school,
By wayside graves are raised,
And lips say 'God be pitiful,'
Who ne'er said 'God be praised.'
Be pitiful, O God!"¹

Sooner or later, my friend still out of Christ, your voice will be raised to Jesus, in faith or in fear, and you will admit that he is the Saviour you seek. God grant that your prayer may not come too late!

3. Those, also, who have known Jesus, and who have felt the sweet influence of his loving presence, desire a closer union with him; and so are still his seekers.

True love increases, not lessens, with intimacy. None seek more earnestly in love than they who know most of the joys of loving companionship. Many of those who were seeking Jesus, in that morning hour in Capernaum, had seen and heard him the day before, and therefore sought him again. He who remembers precious interviews with Jesus, longs for others like them.

You who have, at any time, known the comfort of a sense of the presence of Jesus in your hearts, and have rested for a single hour in his love, cannot be contented if you are for an hour without such peace. You are seekers after its renewal. You who have loved him longest and most, are most desirous of utter oneness of life with him. The more you love him, the more you want to love him more.

There are no such seekers after Jesus as those who

¹ Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

have already found him. The constant prayer of every such seeker is :

“ More love to thee, O Christ,
More love to thee !
Hear thou the prayer I make,
On bended knee ;
This is my earnest plea,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee ! ” ¹

If only the seeking after Jesus were as earnest and hearty as it is widespread and ceaseless, more would have success in their finding, whether they have known much of him or little. “ Ye shall seek me, and find me,” is the promise, “ when ye shall search for me with all your heart ” (Jer. 29 : 13).

“ With all your heart ” ! Do you know what that means ? Let me tell you. A soldier who had been long in Southern prisons called at my home after the war. I had met him first while we were prisoners in Charleston jail. Afterwards we were together in the jail at Columbia. He had gone to Belle Island. Three years had passed ; and now, as we met once more, I asked him of his later prison experiences.

“ I don't remember much about it, Chaplain,” he said, “ only that I wanted bread. I know it was twenty-three months after my capture before I was released ; but after I left Columbia it is all confused in my mind. I know I was at Belle Island awhile, and a long time at Andersonville.

¹ Mrs. E. P. Prentiss.

“How hungry I was at Andersonville ! For awhile I used to want to hear from home. Then I grew so hungry that I didn’t think of home. For awhile I wanted to escape. But by and by I was too hungry to care for that. I only wanted bread, bread, bread. Oh, how hungry I was ; and how I longed for bread !”

That, my friends, was longing for bread “with all the heart,”—with one supreme, overmastering desire. Home and friends, and liberty and life, lost sight of, thought of, in the ceaseless craving for needful food ! Blessed are they who do thus hunger after the Bread of Life in Jesus Christ ; “for they shall be filled” (Matt. 5 : 6).

And now, my fellow-disciples, in view of this truth that all are seeking Jesus, in heathen lands and in Christian lands, what is our duty, what is our responsibility, as to bringing a knowledge of Jesus to those who are his seekers, and as to urging his claims upon their love and confidence ? Have we nothing to do in carrying the gospel story to lands where it is yet untold, but where its truths are longed for ?

“ Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny ? ” ¹

Is it of no concern to us that some who are by our sides are far away from Jesus, yet are wishing to be near him ? Shall we refuse them our help, in word or deed, because they have never asked our aid ?

¹ Bishop Heber’s Missionary Hymn.

Suppose that just here and now, while I am preaching in this pulpit, one were to rise up in this congregation, and cry out, piteously, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" would any of us sit unconcernedly with that call ringing in our ears? Would not all of us be quick to proffer help or counsel? I knew of an occurrence of this very kind.

It was at the mid-week prayer-meeting of a church in a New England town. It was an ordinary meeting, and there were ordinary prayers and ordinary talks being made. Suddenly a man rose up in the back part of the room, who had just slipped in from the street and taken his seat there. In a voice quivering with emotion, and tense with agony of spirit, he spoke out: "My friends! you all know me. I am a moral wreck. A few minutes ago I was out in the darkness, proposing to put an end to this wretched life of mine. But I saw the light in here, and I said to myself, Cannot the Saviour, to whom they are praying in there, save even me? So I came in; and now I ask you to pray for me. I am a lost sinner. Can you help me to the Saviour?"

The speaker was a man who had stood high in his profession, and in the respect of the community, but who had gone down step by step, through the habit of drink, until he was an object of general pity. And now his agonized cry, "I am a lost sinner. Can you help me to the Saviour?" pierced every heart in that room.

There were no longer any ordinary prayers, or

ordinary talks in *that* prayer-meeting that evening. One after another, men rose up to pray with and for that man, as if their heart depths were being poured out to Jesus. And then those disciples of the Saviour gathered about that poor sinner, to speak tender and earnest words of encouragement and guidance, and they fairly lifted him up to Jesus on the arms of their love and faith. Yet that man's need was just as great before he cried out for help as afterward. Why did they wait for him to tell them so?

The duty of discerning an obvious need is as positive as the duty of supplying a need when it is made known. It is an Oriental saying that "It is to our shame if a beggar has to ask our help," for we ought to see his need and meet it before he speaks of it. Peculiarly is this true of the need of needs of the human soul for Jesus. When we understand that all are seeking him, we ought to be helping all to find him, without being asked by them to do so.

Passing up Broadway one day, I saw a group rapidly gathering at a street corner. Pushing my way into the growing throng, I saw a bright-faced child, not above five or six years old. He was well-dressed, and gave every appearance of belonging to a home of refinement. The little fellow had been seen toddling along, all alone, in the busy street, and had attracted attention as a lost child. Quickly a group had gathered about him in loving interest.

As I looked down upon the boy in tender sympathy, he turned up his face to mine with an expres-

sion of confidence and longing, and reaching out his tiny hand toward me, he said, in a gentle, plaintive voice, "Please, won't you show me my way home?" Instantly that child-like cry for help went to the heart of every looker-on, and I doubt if there was a busy man in all that city throng—certainly not a *father* there—who wouldn't have dropped everything just then to help that lost child homeward.

Yet that lost child was just as surely seeking his father's house when his tired feet were pattering along the crowded way, himself unnoticed in the hurrying throng, as when his thrilling call for help came up into the ears of those who stood about him at the street corner; and one who had stopped to care for the child before a word was spoken, would have deserved more credit than us all.

There are many of these lost children seeking their Father's house, in the busy way we travel. Let us show them the way home!

A SEED SERMON

V

A SEED SERMON

My only life as a "settled" pastor was at St. Augustine, where I joined my regiment after my release from Libby Prison. Not only my regiment was there, but another regiment of my brigade; the convalescent camp for officers of the entire Department of the South was there; teachers of the "freedmen" were there, and some prominent civilians from the North; and there was quite a population of St. Augustine natives remaining,—making in all a considerable population to be cared for religiously. I was the only Protestant clergyman in the city, as the pastors of the local Protestant churches had gone into the interior on the approach of the Union forces. In this state of things, the military authorities placed the Protestant churches at my disposal, and I did the best I could to meet the existing needs.

We had church services both morning and evening. We had a Sunday-school in the afternoon, and there were meetings to be looked after at different hours in the gathering places of the newly-emancipated freedmen. We had also mid-week prayer-meetings, and we had at times special services, including the celebra-

tion of the Lord's Supper. That was a portion of my life that I hope I profited by. My opportunities were certainly rich and important.

One of the subjects that we really had to consider was the absolute certainty of reaping according to the sowing. Both in the North and in the South, among the whites and the blacks, there was being gathered a harvest that had been long before sowed for. And in the fields of both good and evil there was seed being sown before my eyes continually, beyond the realization or thought of the sowers. Therefore a theme that for the time impressed me, and that I sought to impress on those of my charge, was the certainty of reaping what one has sown.

I wrote and preached a sermon on that subject, and the subject and sermon proved to be a germ for future growth. I repeated it in various forms in different fields of army life. After the war I preached on the subject in civil life, especially before the young in boarding-schools and colleges near and far. One phase of that preaching is here given. It is a good thought for to-day.

SEED-SOWING AND GROWING

Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6 : 7).

Only God is *never* mocked, never deceived, never misled by appearances. We can deceive others. We can deceive ourselves. But we cannot deceive God.

Self-deception is, in fact, a great deal commoner, and a great deal easier, than self-knowledge. Who of us can say that he is perfectly clear and plain to himself? that concerning himself he cannot be deceived?

“What am I, and how? If reply there be,
In unsearchable chaos 'tis cast.
Though the soaring spirit of restless man
Might the boundary line of the universe scan,
And measure and map its measureless plan,—
The gift of self-knowledge were last!”¹

Moreover, it is a great deal commoner, and a great deal easier, for us to deceive our fellows than it is for us to disclose ourselves to our fellows.

No human being ever fully understood another human being. Parents cannot read the hearts of their own children. Husbands and wives can be one

¹ Frances Ridley Havergal.

in everything else rather than in an inter-knowledge of each other's hearts. Brothers and sisters are, at the closest, strangers to the real inner selves of their brothers and sisters. And the best of human friends, in spite of all their love and longing, often misunderstand and are misunderstood by one another, sometimes in the very things and at the very points where most they strive after an absolute revealing.

"We hold our dear ones with a firm, strong grasp ;
We hear their voices, look into their eyes ;
And yet, betwixt us in that clinging clasp,
A distance lies." ¹

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness ; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy" (Prov. 14 : 10). "Walls of adamant," says one, "could not more effectually separate us from direct spiritual communing than the state in which God has created us." He, therefore, who boasts that he can read his fellows through and through, shows how thoroughly he is deceived in this supposing that he cannot be deceived. Only He who made the heart of man knows the heart of man, and needeth not that any should testify of man, because he knows what is in man, and what man is (John 2 : 24, 25).

So "God is not mocked," is not deceived. He knows the work of his own hands : "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight : but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4 : 13).

¹ Elinor Gray.

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16 : 7). And just in proportion as the All-knowing One discloses his knowledge of his creatures to his creatures, do any of his creatures know their fellows or know themselves. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God : but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (Deut. 29 : 29).

Our text gives us the key to most of our knowledge of all that breathes or lives. God, who is never deceived, wills that the inner being of his creatures shall be shown outwardly in the reproduction after its kind, of every sentient being, and living thing, and vital thought, in nature. "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7 : 16). "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The fruit that *is* proves the seed that *was*.

From the beginning this has been God's law. At the creation, "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth : . . . the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind : and it was so" (Gen. 1 : 11, 24). And so it has been, and still is. "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?" (Jas. 3 : 12.) "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit ; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matt. 7 : 16, 17).

The appearance of a tree may deceive the eye ; but its fruit will prove its quality and inner life beyond a question. Many might mistake the leaf and the flower of the bitter orange for those of the sweet orange ; but no one would mistake the fruit of the one for the other, in their tasting. Roasted peas have been palmed off for coffee in the grocery store and in the boarding-house, but what manipulation would make a planted pea bring forth a Java coffee bush? There is a kind of darnel, or rye grass, called by the botanists *Lolium murinum*, or "mouse-rye," because it so counterfeits the real grain that the very mice are deceived by it. But would a kernel of that, in the richest soil, ever produce the other? No! Mice or men may be deceived, but "God is not mocked."

God orders nature in all her processes, and conforms her to his eternal laws. "Whatsoever [seed] a man soweth, that [and that alone, stalk and leaf, and flower and fruit, each after its kind] shall he also reap."

As in the lower forms of animate life, so also in the higher. As in matter, so in mind. Elements of taste, peculiarities of temper, habits of thought and word and conduct, are all of them germinal and reproductive, bringing forth in their development ever after their kind ; "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4 : 28).

The boy Galileo, studying the theory of the spinning-tops his playfellows were whipping on the school-

grounds, was sowing the seeds of philosophical discovery he later reaped so richly. David Wilkie, sketching before he could read, and beginning to paint before he could spell, drawing his schoolmates' portraits for two marbles or an apple each ; James Ferguson, as a shepherd's boy, on his back in the open field by night, measuring the distances between stars on a string of beads ; Napoleon, wakening the echoes of the Corsican grotto with the explosions of his toy cannon ; and Garfield, drinking in a love of country and a longing for high achievement from the rude ballads of the war of 1812, sung to him by his dear old mother in his childhood's border home ; all of these were sowing seeds of taste and acquirement and action, to bring forth fruit in due season, each "after his kind."

Fairy tales, read with wonderment and delight in early childhood, color, through their reproduction, the adult imagination, often with reference to ordinary home life or social relations ; while the ghost stories heard in the nursery, or in the kitchen, are seeds of terror and superstition which are fruitful in later life, even in minds well stored and cultivated otherwise. And so the whole field of the intellect is filled in accordance with the law of sowing and growing.

Similarly, also, the soul is supplied. Moral qualities have germs,—germs which bring forth fruit, each after its kind. Our first parents sowed, in Eden, for the race, the seeds of unbelief and disobedience when they distrusted God's word and violated his com-

mand; and in the hearts of all their descendants the fruit of that sowing is manifest to-day. Timothy, the youthful bishop, showed in his "faith unfeigned" (1 Tim. 1 : 5), and in his other fitness for the great work assigned him, how carefully good seed was sown in his heart "from a child" (2 Tim. 3 : 15), when he learned the lessons of Holy Scripture from the lips and lives of mother and grandmother,—lessons of obedience and fidelity and faith. And so it has been ever since.

"A wonderful thing is a seed!
The one thing deathless forever,—
The one thing changeless, utterly true,
Forever old, and forever new,
And fickle and faithless never.

"Plant blessings, and blessings will blow;
Plant hate, and hate will grow.
You can sow to-day; to-morrow shall bring
The blossom that proves what sort of thing
Is the seed, the seed that you sow."

"Be not deceived," nor think you can deceive God. "God is not mocked—for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The fruit of sown seed will ever be reaped in *kind*, but not in *degree*, with its planting. The botanist Ray counted 2,000 grains of Indian corn on a plant sprung from one seed; 4,000 seeds on one plant of sunflower; 32,000 seeds on a single poppy plant, and 36,000 seeds on one plant of tobacco.

You will notice in this exhibit that the meaner the

stock the bigger the crop. Tobacco propagates eighteen times as fast as Indian corn. That is the way of the world—as the world is. And here is an added reason why we should look well to the seed planted.

It has been shown that, at the rate of multiplication evidenced of a single bean, the third year's growth of a bean would amount to nearly 43,000,000 bushels; and that in eight years as much corn might spring from one seed as would supply all mankind with bread for a year and a half.

The planted acorn springs up, not a single acorn, but an oak, which shall bear ten thousand times ten thousand acorns, and still the end is not. The "handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains" is multiplied until "the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon" (Psa. 72 : 16); and the bread cast upon the waters (Eccl. 11 : 1) is found after many days, not as it was scattered, "bare grain" (1 Cor. 15 : 37), but in the waving expanses of vast fields of golden ears.

In the mental and moral spheres, likewise, the fruit, in thought and act, is in many-folded reproduction of that which in kind was sown. As it has been said: "Sow an act, and you reap a habit; sow a habit, and you reap a character; sow a character, and you reap a destiny."

The lad puffing at a bit of lighted rattan or twisted paper, in imitation of the genteel smoker, is sowing seed which is in harvest when the strong man with sodden brain and disordered digestion, or with can-

cered lips, is, in the sight of all eyes but his own, the slave unto death of his love of tobacco. The little fellow who just a few times plays marbles "for keeps," or the youth who occasionally invests in a raffle at a church fair, sows seed which finds fruitage when the excited gambler stakes his wrecked fortune, his character, and his very soul, on the throw of the dice or the turn of the cards, in his last hopeless venture of chance.

Seed-planting and harvest stand over against each other in the boy who shows meanness in dividing a school lunch, or in refusing the use of his bat, or sled, or bicycle to his playfellow, and the close-fisted miser whose heart is shut against every call of the needy for help or sympathy; in the child at the family dinner, sipping claret or home-made wine (such home-made wine as made Noah so disgracefully drunken) (Gen. 9: 20, 21), and the hopeless sot on his way, through the gutter, to the drunkard's grave and hell; in the free use of boyish slang, and the impious utterances of the blasphemer; in the first over-stepping the bounds of modesty, and the terrible end of the libertine or prostitute; in the early neglect of God's house and word, with jokes over sacred themes, and the gloomy lot of the dark-browed infidel.

Oh! there is a world of truth in one of the blunt satirical suggestions of a slang-writer of our day: "Boys, if you want a sure crop, and a big yield, sow wild oats!"¹

¹ Josh Billings.

He who soweth the wind "shall reap the whirlwind" (Hos. 8 : 7). The buried dragon's teeth in the fable sprang up not teeth merely, but armed men ready for the fight. So of every element of evil in the soul,—the reproduction in augmented force and reach is as sure as is its reappearance after its kind.

The boy Nero, of such native gentleness that he sheds tears over the sufferings of insect life (and even at the last he has an unknown friend to strew flowers on his bloody grave), has seed of blackest crime sown in his heart by his mother's guilty example. He is but seventeen when she murders her husband, his father ; and so rapidly does that seed of crime fructify, that only five years later he foully murders that mother, whom he once loved with tenderness, and he is yet but twenty-seven when he fiddles over burning Rome, and lights up his palace garden with the blazing bodies of living Christians.

And lovely traits grow, as do those which are abhorred, although the native soil of the human heart is less favorable to these, and they require more care in their cultivation.

Love for a good mother—grateful, tender, trustful love—planted in a son's heart when his mother is all the world to him, and he sits by her knee, having never known doubt of the pure and the good, nor experienced the world's cold selfishness, is the germ of love to others, and of confidence in the better instincts of his fellows' hearts ; or it may even be the germ of belief in his mother's religion,—to bring forth duly in

precious fruitage. Said Richard Cecil, of his coldest days of unbelief: "There was one argument I could never get over,—the influence and life of a godly mother." And that one good seed retained its vital power through years of seeming death, even as the grains of wheat, enwrapped in the cerements of the mummy, have been said to germinate and bear fruit after thirty centuries in the tombs of Egypt.

Two centuries and more ago, on the banks of the Isis, a seed of love for truth, and of devotion to conscience, and of adherence to honest dealings with and to peaceful measures toward all men, and of uncompromising fidelity to religious freedom, was sown by a Quaker preacher in the mind of a gay and pleasure-loving English youth, at that time a student in Oxford University. Twenty years later that youth was in the American wilderness, on the banks of the Delaware, broadcasting the fruitage of that seed; and to-day our City of Brotherly Love, in its pride and beauty and far-reaching influence, and our mighty commonwealth, with its matchless record of unhampered civil and religious liberty during the now completed two centuries of its history, are but the beginnings of the endless harvest of that single grain of good.¹

To-day we joy in the product of that planting by William Penn, when in toil and in prayer for us and for ours his heart-cry was: "And thou, Philadelphia, the virgin settlement of this province, named before

¹ This sermon was preached on Philadelphia's Bi-Centennial celebration.

thou wert born,—what love, what care, what service, and what travail has there been to bring thee forth, and preserve thee from such as would abuse and defile thee! My soul prays to God for thee, that thou may'st stand in the day of trial, that thy children may be blessed of the Lord, and thy people saved by his power.”¹

And here in the home of William Penn, the same law of seed-planting and harvest-bearing is still operative, in lesser things as in larger; and that which seems least at the start may show itself large in its results.

The little girl, tending carefully her doll, watching over it in its imaginary illness, and keeping its every tiny article of dress in neatness and repair, is sowing the seeds of motherly gentleness and devotion, and of matronly skill and efficiency, to bear abundant harvest in another home circle in the coming years. And the child in the Sunday-school, encouraged to deny itself some craved luxury to aid a missionary in the home or foreign field, or the group of little folks planning ways and means of securing help to a needy family, will be likely to exhibit the fruit of such seed-sowing in an enlarged interest in benevolent operations of every kind for God's glory and man's welfare when childhood's day are over.

“The secret is deeper than we can read,—

But we gather the grain if we sow the seed.”²

“*Whatsoever* a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap.”

¹ William Penn, 1684.

² Lucy Larcum.

It shall bring forth fruit abundantly, "some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred" (Mark 4 : 20).

Think of this, you who oversee the young,—parent, teacher, friend,—in its bearings on the future of those given into your charge !

When you note in them the beginnings of evil,—indolence, irresolution, selfishness, ill-nature, disobedience, impurity, irreverence, sinful indulgence of any kind,—do not look upon these things as faults seen already at their worst, and which must be accepted as the inevitable flaws and failures of poor human nature ; but realize that they are poisonous germs, with life and propagative power, to multiply and increase after their kinds, to gain steadily in strength and reach, to take a new hold in new places daily, even as the branches of the banyan dip to earth to root themselves anew, and thus to cause the outstretching limbs to cover and contain the whole plain, in the centre of which the tree stood solitary and compact at first.

Unless you would welcome the harvest from these seeds of evil, you should spare no pains and spurn no help in the time of seed-sowing. Do not think that "boys must be boys," and that "girls must be girls," in the sense that every boy must be permitted to have the ways of bad boys, or that every girl must be tolerated in the follies of thoughtless and ill-trained girls. Nor count it probable that a crop of evil habits will run themselves out of a young person's heart-soil. "Wild oats" and "Canada thistles" never run

out. Everything in nature tends to their nurture and development.

Whether you desire the harvest or not, your children are sowing for one.

“ Ah ! some are sowing the seeds of pain,
Of late remorse, and a maddened brain ;
And the stars shall fall, and the sun shall wane,
Ere they root the weeds from their soil again.
Dark will the harvest be ! ”

And when you, young man or young woman,—or man or woman of any age,—are tempted to depart from the right in the smallest matter, or to begin a course you would dislike as a fixed habit, understand that in such departure or such beginning a seed is planted which will many-fold itself, and then must be reaped.

You may spend only a trifle more than you earn ; may waste only a few hours daily in idling ; may defraud only a railroad company or other rich corporation, and that only in a very small amount ; may be dishonest or untruthful in only one of a hundred petty ways which the world winks at ; may violate the law of purity only in what seems hardly worth noting ; may deceive or wrong only a child ; may break only the least of God's commandments, and teach men so,—and in all this you may give no occasion for public scandal. Can any great harm come from this ? Ah ! my friend, “ Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

“ That shall *he* also *reap* ! ” Mark that, will you ?

Every man must reap his own crop. Not only shall the seed grow and multiply, but the fruit shall be gathered by him who planted the seed. "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" (1 Cor. 9 : 7.) "The recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto *him*" (Prov. 12 : 14). "To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward" (Prov. 11 : 18). And "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity" (Prov. 22 : 8).

The seed once sown, and the crop follows. Regret for the sowing will not avert the necessity of reaping. When the tares are rooted, they will grow with the wheat "until the harvest" (Matt. 13 : 30). Not until those tares have been gathered in, can they be burned from sight forever.

Esau, having profanely bartered his high birthright for a mess of pottage, afterward, when he bewailed his folly, and would fain have secured a reversal of the consequences, "found no place of repentance,"—no place of such repentance as would restore him his lost possession,—"though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb. 12 : 17). He had sown. He must reap.

David was bitterly sorrowful over his double crime against Uriah; but the sword he had taken to cut off a trusting and devoted follower never departed from his house while he lived. He was a man of blood and a sufferer from treachery thenceforward until his death (2 Sam. 12 : 9-13). The crop he sowed for must be reaped, even though its sowing was repented of and forgiven.

So always. Forgiven sins have their earthly fruitage. Regeneration does not give a man a new eye, or a new arm, if he has lost one through some early transgression. Nor does it restore to him the primitive delicacy of tastes he has perverted, and the pristine vigor of moral senses he has blunted.

Says quaint and godly old Thomas Fuller : " Lord, how come wicked thoughts to perplex me in my prayers, when I desire and endeavor only to attend thy service? Now, I perceive the cause thereof; at other times I have willingly entertained them, and now they entertain themselves against my will. I acknowledge thy justice, that what formerly I have invited, now I cannot expel.

" Give me, hereafter, always to bolt out such ill-guests. The best way to be rid of such thoughts in my prayers, is not to receive them out of my prayers." Or, in other words, the better way to avoid such reaping is to change the style of sowing.

Lord, deliver us from tares and their accursed crop ! Lord, keep us from sowing that which we wish not to reap ! The daily struggles of some of God's dear children with habits of thought and modes of speech and impulses of action, fastened on them in days of bitterly-repent-ed misdoing, can never be conceived by those who were spared the sorry sowing of seeds of flesh and folly.

Nor does the harvest of character end with the life that now is. There is no *seed-sowing* beyond the grave, but the sheaves of earth's fields are finally

stored in the garner of eternity. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done [in the seed-sowing line], whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5: 10).

Follow men, if you will, down through their earthly lives, and note the signs of the coming harvest as they approach eternity's verge, if you would see whether or not their experiences tend, invariably, to the confirmation of this explicit and unqualified declaration of the word of God.

Nothing is reaped in eternity but was sowed for in time. And a dying man is no more likely than a man in full health to begin good seed-sowing. If the voice of God were to sound audibly in this house this evening, saying, "In one hour from now, every soul here must stand at my Judgment Bar," I believe that few if any of you who are now unprepared for eternity would be ready at the hour's close. You would doubtless pray for a good harvest; but would you plant for it? If you think you would do good planting then, *why not now?*

I have stood by very many dying men, my friends,—not merely men dying of disease, so that their hold on life was relaxed almost imperceptibly, but in my army chaplaincy I stood by men dropping out of full health with mortal wounds, or men brought in unabated vigor to kneel by their open graves, face to face with their military executioners,—but I never yet saw in any dying man's experience any seeming con-

tradiction of God's law of germ and growth and product in the soul.

Ten times I have been with men going out to be shot or hanged for crime. Surely if any external circumstances could change a man's character, it would be when the hour of his death was fixed, and a limited season was given him to prepare for eternity. If ever he would show love for a better crop than that of his planting, it would be in such an emergency. But I have found men at a time like this giving plainest evidence of the harvest for which they had long been sowing.

Serious they all were, and ready to look the future in the face. Some were in an agony of remorse, and cried out in bitterness of soul at the thought of what was before them. But, mark you, praying against a harvest is not in itself planting for one. Some who tried to devote themselves to preparations for eternity, showed, in spite of their best efforts, more real interest in what they were to eat and drink at their last meal on earth than in the whole plan of salvation. They could even bring themselves to believe—now that die they must—that without any new seed-sowing they would have another harvest than the one for which they had so long been making ready. They could deceive themselves, but God was not mocked; that which they had sown, they were now to reap.

My first experience with a man who was to be hanged impressed this truth on me. It was a soldier who had killed a comrade in cold blood. On the day

of his execution I was with him in the provost-marshal's quarters in a Virginia camp, seeking to prepare him for death. He was to start out for the gallows at two o'clock. At about twelve a soldier of his company brought him his noon rations for the day. As the man entered the tent with the food, I was kneeling in prayer with the condemned man. At the interruption he looked up, and, seeing the food, he was at once interested. Enjoyment in prayer he had not sown for, but a love of eating and drinking he had been sowing for all his life. Running his eye over the things brought in, he said, in a tone of disappointment :

"Can't I have some cheese? I had some cheese yesterday."

His comrade, seemingly shocked at this interest in such a matter on the verge of eternity, replied :

"I suppose I can get you some cheese," and he hurried off after it. When it was brought, the condemned man took the cheese and the pork and the bread, and his tin cup of coffee, and in his last hours on earth he seemed to have as much interest in this latest reaping of his life-harvest as ever before. When every morsel of his rations was eaten he wiped the pork grease from his lips with his coat sleeve, and then turned to me and said :

"Now I'm ready for you, Chaplain, to pray with me again."

Yet, when the guard came to escort him to the gallows, he added in evident sincerity :

"I wish they'd give me a swig o' whisky, to brace me before they trice me up."

Could there be any doubt as to what that man had sowed, and of which he was now to reap the harvest?

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This truth of our text, my friends, is God's truth, and a terrible truth it is to the sinner! What hope is there in it—or out of it—to you and to me? We have done some sorry seed-sowing in our day. Must we reap the harvest accordingly? Who, then, can be saved?

Ah! there is an earthly seed-sowing that brings a heavenly harvest. Good seed—seeds of love and obedience and trust—planted in the blood-moistened earth at the foot of the cross can start a vine which shall twine its tendrils around that cross, and find its way up and up, until it reaches through the clouds, to bear precious fruit before the Throne eternally.

The choice is between that seed-sowing and all others. "He that soweth to his flesh"—he whose deeds of good and ill are of the flesh and for the flesh, limited in their plan to himself and to his fellows and to the life that now is—"shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit"—whose heart-soil is softened and opened and sown by the Holy Spirit—"shall of the Spirit"—by the Holy Spirit's power—"reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6: 8).

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, tem-

perance : against such there is no law" (Gal. 5 : 22, 23), and to such there is no end, no death. He who brings to the final harvest the fruits of the Spirit, by faith, has thenceforward freedom from the tares and weeds which grew with the good fruit until that harvest.

"Sower Divine !
Sow the good seed in me ;
Seed for eternity.
'Tis a rough, barren soil,
Yet, by thy care and toil,
Make it a fruitful field,
An hundredfold to yield.
Sower Divine,
Plough up this heart of mine ! " ¹

¹ Horatius Bonar.

CHARACTER SURELY DISCLOSED

VI

CHARACTER SURELY DISCLOSED

After my regiment came back from Appomattox Court House at the collapse of the Confederacy, we were for several months stationed a short distance above Richmond, engaged in duties incident to the close of the long war. And then there were trying phases of army life. Of course, it was more difficult to keep up a high standard of zeal or morals or courage among either officers or men. The moral standard is generally higher among soldiers in active service than among civilians in the community from which the soldiers have come; but when the necessity for active service ceases among soldiers, it is a different matter.

With an inevitable letting down of the strictest discipline inside the camp, there was an absence of such pressure from enemies outside as existed in war-time, and outside temptations to officers and men were greatly increased. In consequence the breaches of morality multiplied. Yet nominally there was the same strictness as to presences and absences, and as to keeping within specified bounds, and as to the necessity of having permission to leave camp at any

time, as when we were before the enemy. The increasing demoralization was a cause of regret to me, and I knew it was my duty to do what I could to check it, and to change the tone and current in the regiment.

I found that not unnaturally in our camp, as elsewhere, it was generally felt to be more of a mistake to be found out in a breach of discipline or any misdemeanor, than to do a similar wrong that was concealed. Therefore, among other sermons at that time, I preached one on the sure uncovering of character, or the certainty of wrong-doing being ultimately found out. Among incidental illustrations of my theme I gave this :

“An officer may slip unobserved through the guard-line in the darkness of a rainy evening, and go into town for a ‘good time.’ When his ‘good time’ is over for the night, he may, in coming back, slip again through the guard-line and get into his tent without being seen. As he then sinks into his late and heavy slumber, he may congratulate himself on having done all this without any one in camp knowing about it. But when the sergeant of the guard comes to his tent the middle of the next forenoon with a message, and finds that officer sound asleep on the outside of his bed with his muddy boots on, the whole company may soon be talking about his performances, which he congratulated himself had been done so slyly.”

As other possibilities in this line were given in that sermon by way of wholly hypothetical illustration, it

became a subject of not a little discussion in the camp, among officers and men, which I think was not wholly unprofitable. And this subject of the sure uncovering of character, as treated from the same text, became one of my life treasures and means of usefulness. I re-wrote sermons on that theme, again and again, and preached them in various parts of the country; and I had evidence that God blessed that preaching to the good of souls.

In visiting a well-known family-school in New England, I preached, in the church which the boys of that school attended, this sermon as newly adapted in its illustrations and warnings to hearers of that sort. Among those boys was one of exceptional ability and of a family of national prominence. He had given his parents and teachers much concern by his course, and there was at that time danger of his being dismissed from that school on account of his undesirable influence over other boys, although he had not yet been informed of that fact. He was so influenced by that sermon that he desired to have a conversation with me on the subject, and of course I was glad to talk with him.

As we talked, he said frankly: "It's the first time I was ever really frightened about myself. I have always counted on covering my tracks, and not being found out in my misdoings. But you've shown me that I've got, in the long run, to be known as I am. Now I want to be a different man." That was a good starting-point for any boy. I tried to help him. He

was soon on another path. He became an earnest and useful clergyman. When, some years after this, I heard him preach in a prominent pulpit in the city where I then lived, I was glad to remember that long-ago talk with him. At the close of the service at which he preached, he greeted me heartily, and said warmly that it was because of my sermon which so took hold of him, that he was in the ministry.

Perhaps of no sermon that I ever preached have I had so many evidences of its hold on hearers as this one, on the sure uncovering of character. And I have had reason to be grateful that in our camp before Richmond, in the spring of 1865, I was moved to preach on the subject.

KNOWN AS WE REALLY ARE

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known (Luke 12 : 1, 2).

The leaven is that within the mass which puffs it up, and gives it show of bulk beyond its substance. Leaven acts only by fermentation,—adding nothing to the mass, but merely swelling it. The working of leaven is often more effective than its material is choice. It may be bitter hops, or sour dough, which lighten and expand the most comely and attractive loaf.

Hence the fitness of our Saviour's figure in the text. The Pharisees had the fairest exterior of all the Jewish sects. Closely attentive to religious ceremonies, and conspicuous in prayer and almsgiving, they claimed confidently—and with an appearance of reason—a superiority to their co-religionists. Yet they made a show of godliness not justified by their spiritual life.

And when Jesus of Nazareth—giving prominence, as always, to the making clean of the inner rather than the outer man—had, on a certain occasion, disre-

garded one of their traditional washings, he found his personal rectitude called in question by a Pharisee.

It was then, "when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another,"—Pharisees and the common herd commingled,—that our Lord "began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." As though he would say, "These fair-favored, open-mouthed, self-asserting religionists, with their swelling words of proud profession, are inflated with an element I would have you shun. Whatever exterior you may present to the world, see to it that your reputation is otherwise gained than by such assumptions as distend their being." "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

And when Jesus stigmatized the inner life of the Pharisees as "hypocrisy," he gave to it the most obnoxious of all names; for there is no other charge from the reproach of which men shrink like *hypocrisy*. It would be easier, in one of our great prison-houses, to find five confessing murderers than to find one avowed hypocrite. "I know that I am bad; but I'm not a hypocrite!" is the cry of the vilest transgressor.

Yet hypocrisy is a very common sin,—more common than murder, or than even theft or bald lying. There have been more hypocrites preaching and hearing the gospel to-day than of any other class of evil-doers. And if this roof above us covers no hypocrite

this evening, it is above a very rare assemblage of miscellaneous church-goers.

What is hypocrisy? It is "a feigning to be what one is not," "a concealment of one's real character or motives." Every man who *thus* feigns, or *thus* conceals, is a hypocrite. A man may, it is true, feign other than his real *emotions*, or conceal many of his *actions*, without hypocrisy; for he has a right to the privacies of his personal and family and business life—within due bounds; and he is under no obligation to show at all times how he feels, or to tell to others what he has been doing. But if he assumes a character which is not his own, or feigns to be another kind of man than he is, or conceals his prevailing motives of conduct, he is a hypocrite.

Any minister who preaches as if he were God's messenger, and lives like a servant of Satan, is a hypocrite. So, also, is any church-member whose daily walk is a libel on his, or her, religious professions. Thus much all will admit. But hypocrisy is not wholly among ministers and church-members,—perhaps not chiefly there. There is much of hypocrisy out of the church, among men who have never called themselves Christians, or claimed to be religiously disposed.

The law of *morals* is the same for the man of the world as for the church-member; so, also, is the law of honor and of true manliness. He who calls himself a moral man while he is intemperate, or dishonest, or untruthful, or impure, is as surely hypocritical

—in feigning a character he does not possess—as is a minister who, in his pulpit, advocates total abstinence, and drinks wine or whisky in his study. He who claims to be a man of honor and of manliness, yet deliberately overreaches a neighbor, defrauds the government, is untrue to a woman, or overbearing toward a child, is no less a hypocrite than is a church-member who is prominent alike in the prayer-meeting and in the gambling-house.

And there are irreligious steady church-goers who are hypocrites,—who are hypocrites in claiming that they are not hypocritical. They admit that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of sinners, and that he calls on them to come to him in penitence and faith, and confess him before men as their Saviour. Yet they persistently refuse to do as he desires them to; and, while thus refusing, they pride themselves on their freedom from inconsistency, because, as they say, they make no professions which they do not live up to. Their every breath away from Christ, and out of the Christian fold, is utterly inconsistent with their admitted convictions of duty; yet they ask on this very account to be reckoned sincere and consistent well-doers. What more clearly-defined and flagrant hypocrisy than theirs is possible?

Just here, let me say that hypocrites are not always the worst of men; that hypocrisy is not in itself as bad as much of the evil purposes and shortcomings and wrong-doing which it is made to cover, albeit it is so generally abhorred. If a man lacks a good char-

acter, it is rather in his favor that he wants people to think he has one. "It is a good sign in a man to be capable of being ashamed," says a Talmudic proverb. He has fallen lowest in depravity who is willing to be known as vile.

Hypocrisy is, I say, commonly less culpable than barefaced, defiant rascality; yet, understand me, hypocrisy is never to be viewed with favor or tolerance. The injunction of our Lord, in the text, is mandatory on *all*; on us now as on his disciples of old,—"*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy*"! See to it that that which gives *you* reputation, in church or in community, is not the Pharisees' leaven.

And *why* beware of hypocrisy? Why shun it with loathing? First, of course, because it is sinful. The greatest objection to any vice is its sinfulness. This is too obvious to justify discussion. But Jesus adds another reason—a secondary yet a weighty one—for recoiling from this iniquity, in his assertion that hypocrisy practically amounts to but little; that its existence will surely be disclosed. The leaven will work its process of fermentation only for a time,—then comes the collapse, leaving only a contemptible residuum. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

Ah! if men but believed this divine utterance,—if they realized it in all its far-reaching significance,—would there not be less of hypocritical pretension in the world, and less of evil being and doing to be covered up? If when men had sinned, their eyes could be opened to a sense of their characters standing naked before the world, would they not hide themselves “amongst the trees of the garden” until they could obtain fig-leaves to make themselves aprons?

If the foul-mouthed or false-speaking man, or boy, knew that his every impure or profane word would echo in the ears of mother, wife, or sister; or that his every untruth would be sounded out as a lie among all whose confidence he desired,—think you not he would strive to keep the door of his lips? If every evil act or unholy thought were sure to be written on the forehead, apparent to every passer, would not the prayer of many go up, “Cleanse thou me from secret faults” (Psa. 19 : 12), and “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord”? (Psa. 19 : 14.)

If, indeed, all hypocrites were convinced that the cloaks they now fold around their characters so gracefully must be torn away, that the veils which now conceal their moral features must be uplifted, that the records of motive which no eye but their own has ever seen, must be exposed to the gaze of all,—would they not stand appalled, and be compelled to long earnestly for a better character than that formed by the Pharisees’ leaven, with its rapidly effervescing power?

Yes! The blessed Jesus "knew what was in man,"—knew his fears and desires, knew what would influence and impress him; and because of the potency of such a truth with every man accepting it, our Saviour uttered the startling declaration of our text,—a declaration alarming to any person who would fain conceal his character from his fellows, but one of which the truth is reaffirmed continually, to every intelligent observer of the course of nature and the dealings of Providence,—“There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”

Let us look, for a few minutes, at some of the corroboratory evidences of the truth of this declaration.

1. The tendency of all nature is to openness, not to concealment; to uncovering, not to hiding.

Cut a single gash, scarcely perceptible to-day, in the trunk of a vigorously growing sapling, and that gash will grow wider as the tree grows larger; and years hence the scar will be more prominent than in the hour it was made. Take every stone from the surface of a newly-plowed field, and harrow over the upturned earth until all is level and fair,—then leave it to itself for a single year. Will that field present the same unbroken surface when twelve months have gone? Or, will the silent workings of nature have thrown up from below the pebbles and boulders that can be covered only for a season?

The ocean is, with its every tide-flow, washing from

its depths some of its long-hid treasures, and revealing along the beach the shells and weed and coral and fragments of wreck that were hidden for only a passing time. The very mountains and hills are crumbling away; and again the valleys they cover are being laid bare as before. Cities buried under the volcanic flow of one age are exposed in the next. One earthquake opens what another had concealed. Each season discloses some secret of one that went before. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn" (Ezek. 21 : 27), says nature doing God's work, in all its changing moods; and the falling rain, the rushing wind, and the roaring surf, reiterate the divine asseveration, "There is *nothing* covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

God controls in nature all his creations, and conforms them to his eternal purpose of their self-disclosure. It is a primal truth that Campbell puts into the mouth of his wizard:

"Lochiel ! Lochiel ! beware of the day !
For, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal ;
But man can not cover what God would reveal."

Man himself is so formed that the very thoughts of his heart take quick shape in the expression of his face, the movements of his body, and the tones of his voice. The skilled anatomist will tell with unerring accuracy just which facial muscles are brought in play by each varying emotion. It requires, moreover, no scientific knowledge to detect the outward signs of anger, sorrow, or delight; and even an infant knows

the difference between a mother's smile and a mother's frown. All of us perceive in some faces which we meet, the workings below of purity and truthfulness and faith and kindness of heart and nobleness of soul, or of deceitfulness and lust and discontent and sordid selfishness; and we judge the disclosed characters accordingly.

A certain degree of self-control and self-concealment is, to be sure, acquired by resolute purpose and continued practice; but few persons are so far advanced in artful diplomacy as to always employ their words and acts in the Talleyrandic use of concealing one's ideas. It was said of so skilled a politician as Sir Robert Peel, that the manner in which he threw open the collar of his coat on entering Parliament of an evening showed which way the ministerial wind was blowing.

So the most wary will be off their guard sometimes, telling tales of their inner being and feeling by chance remarks or pointed questions; by a start, a shudder, a smile, or a shoulder-shrug; by an answer of thoughtless ill-nature or an act of impulsive meanness; or on the other hand by overflowing words of abounding kindness and far-reaching charity. It is God's truth, and it is God's plan, that "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart *bringeth forth* good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure *bringeth forth* evil things" (Matt. 12 : 35). In the long run a man can not do otherwise than show out his real self.

Men even ache to tell the truth concerning them-

selves, and evil-doers who have a reputation beyond their deserts are, from time to time, confessing their faults one to another,—not so much in obedience to the apostolic injunction as in accordance with the divinely-ordered promptings of their natures. They can not help it. The truth must out.

Hood's "Eugene Aram" gave voice to the vain cry of many a longing hypocrite, as he shut the book he held, and

"Strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp :—
'O God ! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp.' "

And he represented the whole legion of heart-bursting hypocrites, when he sat down with the school-boys, and, under the guise of a dream, told the story of his crime, and of his failures to cover effectually the body of his murdered victim.

"I knew my secret then was one
The earth refused to keep—
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.
So wills the fierce avenging sprite,
Till blood for blood atones !
Aye, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh—
The world shall see his bones."

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed ; neither hid, that shall not be known."

Another verification of our text is this :

2. It is a habit of nature to record its changes ; to self-register its history and progress.

The geologic strata of the earth's substance tell plainly the order of creation, and enable the savant to describe to us the successive formations of the pre-Adamite world. In its mineral, its vegetable, and its animal productions, each age has made its mark, told its story, and left its record for all coming time.

The opened mountain-side reveals its consecutive layers piled one above another, no subsequent accumulations having removed, however they have covered, what went before. The concentric grain rings of the ancient tree trunk show just how many summers and winters have passed since the little acorn broke the surface of the covering soil. And the tiniest moth floating in the sunlight bears evidence on its wings, to the observing naturalist, of the already spent hours of its brief existence.

So of man : not only his age, but his career, is written on his outer being. That which he has passed through is noted ; that which he has done is registered. Disease never leaves the human body just as it found it, nor does sorrow or sin. He who has known real bitterness of soul, he who has been much in imminent peril, he who has indulged in vice, he who has made a hard struggle with temptation,—whether the issue to him was victory or defeat,—gives

testimony of his experiences in both feature and expression.

Tennyson says of Sir Lancelot of the Lake,

“The great and guilty love he bore the Queen,
In battle with the love he bore his lord,
Had mar’d his face, and marked it ere his time.”

A similar process of character-recording goes on in every human countenance. Simple-hearted King Duncan may indeed declare

“There’s no art
To find the mind’s construction in the face,”

but keen-eyed Lady Macbeth knows better than this, and her warning is to her liege, as his plans of treachery and murder progress,

“Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters.”

We are even told by some medical writers, concerning this registering power of the emotions, that each controlling thought and purpose “impresses on the body some indelible mark,” and a long continuance of similar thoughts and feelings makes an imprint which is clearly perceptible. This being so, it is plain that no man can deliberately shirk a duty or do a wrong without having written on his countenance some mark which tends to disclose the story of his failure or transgression, and which, when deepened and multiplied, may be observed by those who are quick at character-judging.

“Understanding human nature,” as we employ the

phrase, involves a familiarity with the sure cipher in which the record of the inner life is written on the outer man. Some are better scholars than others in this language, but all know more or less of it,—more usually than those on whom it is written suppose.

We have all met faces which inspired us on the instant with confidence or with distrust. We felt sure, at the start, of the characters they indicated. One glimpse was sufficient. We did not ask to watch the persons bearing those faces, to learn of them more surely by their daily conduct for weeks or months together. The story of their conduct for years was before us at a glance. We knew what it must have been, and what it would continue to be.

And again we have seen faces change—handsome faces lose their beauty, or plain faces glow with new loveliness—through a disclosure and development of character. We have seen faces grow grandly beautiful under the pressure of new responsibility, at home or in the army. We have seen other faces shine as the face of an angel, in the hour of bereavement and sorrow,—even as the porcelain shade of a study lamp shows for the first time its real attractiveness when the darkness shuts in about it, and the light from within it gleams through, to illuminate and make distinct the lovely picture it presents.

Again, we have noted with sadness the look of purity, of truthfulness, of reverence, of tenderness, pass away from the countenance of one we had admired. Or we have watched with interest the deepening lines

of manly power in the face of one who battled bravely in his contest with some besetting sin, or some soul-racking temptation, until his heroic form seemed hung all over with medals of victory.

As we have observed these disclosed evidences of progress in character,—for better or for worse,—we have had fresh occasion to realize that in man's being—as in every other sphere of nature—there is a book of God's remembrance, preserving for all time the story of each movement and change, and that it is God's will concerning the records of this book that “there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”

There is one more truth in corroboration of our text which ought not to be overlooked.

3. The tireless curiosity of man is an agency for the uncovering of that which craves concealment.

Every man is more or less interested in what concerns his fellows, and he desires to understand the characters of those with whom he is brought into association. He observes, often unintentionally, little things which go to show their idiosyncrasies, and from each and all of these he draws his inferences and derives his impressions. And, in conversation with each other, men compare opinions of those they have separately observed. One has noted one thing; another, another. The information of all becomes common stock, and gradually an average and pretty

accurate estimate is arrived at of the characters under consideration.

He who is skilful enough as a hypocrite to deceive any single observer, proves no match for the combined intelligence of the community when its gaze, from any cause, centers on him. He can easily show one side of his character to one man; but he can not be sure of showing only that side to all of a hundred men who are looking at him from different points of observation.

In the process of what is known as "photo-sculpture," the sitter finds himself in the center of an octagonal chamber, with cameras pointed at him from every side, each taking a picture of him with its own peculiar view. When, afterwards, the various operators bring together their distinct "impressions" of the sitter, he is shown as he appeared from before, from behind, from this side, from that side, and from yet other directions. *Then* it is easy enough to put him in plaster for permanent exhibition. Every man is in such a chamber as that, having these various corresponding impressions made of him, a great deal oftener than he thinks for.

Let a man be nominated for political office, and see if any weak spot in his character has been overlooked by members of the opposite party! Or let a man be charged with crime and brought to trial,—how astonished he is to find that he was observed so closely in his every act at the time in question, by those whom he neither knew nor saw. One and another

can show what streets he passed, what purchases he made, and how he looked and bore himself while yet unsuspected of crime,—while indeed he was no more observed than his fellows; for if another man had been charged with the same misdeed, another set of men would have testified of him with like fidelity of detail.

It is in enforcement of this general truth that Burns gives reminder :

“ If there’s a hole in a’ your coats,
I rede ye tent it ;
A chiel’s amang ye takin’ notes,
And, faith, he’ll prent it.”

A young man, or an older one, may think himself quite out of familiar notice in the crowd of a strange city,—or in the back street of a town where he lives,—when really at least one sharp eye watches intelligently his every movement, or one keen ear catches the sound of his well-known voice; and his conduct there will be quickly reported in the circle of his home friends, although he may not know of this disclosure for months, or years—if ever.

Is it not in view of this certainty of the exposure of evil, through unsuspected reporters everywhere at hand, that the inspired Preacher sounds the warning cry, “Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter”? (Eccl. 10 : 20.)

Ralph Waldo Emerson, like many another of the

world's philosophers, merely paraphrases a Scripture passage to express what is called one of his original thoughts, when he declares: "A man passes for what he is worth. Very idle is all curiosity concerning other people's estimate of us, and all fear of remaining unknown is not less so. . . . The world is full of judgment days, and into every assembly that a man enters, in every action that he attempts, he is gauged and stamped. In every troop of boys that whoop and run in each yard and square, a newcomer is well and accurately weighed in the course of a few days, and stamped with his right measure, as if he had undergone a formal trial of his strength."

What is this but an expansion—or an illustration—of our text? "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

My friends, I beg of you, think of these things! This subject has its practical bearings on the lives of all of you. You are all better known,—estimated more nearly at your true value,—and your course is more clearly watched and widely reported, than most of you have supposed. There are very few persons who would not be surprised if they should hear their neighbors talk of them,—surprised at the particularity with which their characters are sketched, and their conduct is commented on. *You* are no exception to the general rule on this point.

Have you done anything of late which you would be ashamed to let the world know, because of its inconsistency with a character you lay claim to? If you have, it is doubtless more than suspected by others. Your ostrich body may have been seen, while your eyes were buried in the bush. Your tell-tale face may have revealed the story when you thought it covered forever. Your cherished secret is, perhaps, already being whispered into the ears of a constantly-widening circle of listeners. Its full disclosure, to your shame, may be just at hand. It is often thus. A gathered cloud of public censure or contempt is over many a head that stands erect in pride of conscious safety; and only the lightning-rod of a special accusation is needed to cause it to pour its stormy contents on the victim below.

At all events, whatever you have been or have done hitherto, you ought to leave this house to-day resolved, in the strength which God gives to his children who ask believingly, that you will henceforth be and do that—and that only—which you would be willing to have the reputation of, everywhere and always. Your *reputation*, mark you, is what people think you are. Your *character* is what you really are. In the long run, the only sure basis of a good reputation is a good character. You are not likely to have permanently any better name—or any worse—than you deserve.

If you would be counted generous, give liberally—not adroitly. If you wish to be called pure, shun

evil desires and indulgings—rather than waste breath in growls over gossiping neighbors. If you seek credit as a consistent Christian, do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God,—not expecting to win that name by profession, nor to secure it by demand.

But, you may say, there *are* persons whose characters are not disclosed. It may even be a cause of gladness that *you* are not shown to others in your true light. Possibly you flatter yourselves that in your case, at least, there is something covered that shall not be revealed; something hid that shall not be known. Ah! my friends, “the end is not yet” (Matt. 24 : 6). The disclosure may, in one case or another, be long delayed; but it shall come at the last. “The wolf must die in his own skin,” says quaint George Herbert.

If indeed there be no full revelation of your character until the close of your present life, it shall be made beyond: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5 : 10).

“Ah! what trembling then, what quailing,
When shall come the Judge unfailing,
Every human life unveiling.”

No cloak there! What a man “hath done,” not what others suppose him to have done. As he has been, not as he has claimed to be.

"The volume open'd ! open'd every heart !
A sunbeam pointing out each secret thought !"

Then—then, if never before—every eye shall see,
and every ear shall hear, and every mind shall know,
and every heart shall feel—in all the universe of God
—that "there is nothing covered, that shall not be re-
vealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

MY CHAPLAINCY AMONG STUDENTS

VII

MY CHAPLAINCY AMONG STUDENTS

As I have already mentioned, my preaching after my return from the war was practically a result of and was largely shaped by my army service. I had never learned in a theological training school the conventional methods of presenting religious truths, or the science of "sacred rhetoric." And I had reason to know that my hearers perceived this. I had learned to address men in army service, either as new recruits or as trained soldiers, and to press on them practically their duties, their privileges, and their dangers. Abstract truths I had had, as a chaplain, no occasion to discuss or to present.

And in civil life, as in army service, there were many who needed to be addressed as those who must be in life's warfare, and who needed to realize their duties and dangers and privileges, in struggle for and in expectation of the victory and rewards in their sphere. Such soldiers, especially the young ones, appealed to me, and aroused me to appeal to them. Peculiarly was this so in the case of students in preparatory schools and in colleges. On this account I liked to address such students, as I moved about my

New England field in my Sunday-school missionary work. As a boy I had been at school at Williston Seminary in Easthampton, Massachusetts. During the war I had been in service with many Williston boys. After the war I found army comrades among the teachers at Williston, and boys in whom I was particularly interested were pupils there. And thus Williston Seminary became a portion of my field in my chaplaincy after the war.

Preaching to those in that field, I found my sermons of war-time a good preparation for my sermons to them. Well-nigh all the sermons which I preached to these boys I had first preached in the army. The germ had been started there; the change of soil and of atmosphere, of course, demanded changes in development and treatment; but in both places the desired result and fruitage were the same. The training which I had had for the army chaplaincy proved to be a good training for my religious addresses to young cadets who were yet in preparation for active service in life's warfare. And in trying to meet this new demand on my best abilities and efforts, I was really pursuing a post-graduate course of study in the line of my maturer life-studies and endeavors. And this fact may give a certain value to these sermons as showing the method of their preparing and the purpose of their delivering. Obviously they are not conventional sermons, nor are they likely to be valued as such.

When I had been preaching to the Williston boys

one of the foregoing sermons inspired by the soldier spirit, Principal Marshall Henshaw asked me into his office on Monday morning to request a special favor from me, or to lay a particular duty on me. He said kindly that my style of preaching seemed to attract and lay hold on the boys, and he wanted my help in meeting a particular difficulty that he had to contend with in their control. He said that even well-disposed boys who, if left to themselves, would prefer to do right, would often be induced to go with the crowd in the wrong direction. It was not a matter of wrong purpose so much as it was a lack of determined independence in action. He believed that with my method of getting at boys I could find a way of meeting this, as an ordinary clergyman could not. He wished that when I came again I would preach on the subject.

So with this mission thus laid on me, my thoughts were at once turned to the subject. The preparing for the doing of that special duty proved to be one of the developing periods of my life-course. Having decided on my text and sermon-plan, I set myself to gathering the material for the filling in of the outline. I sought special needful knowledge and illustrative facts in books in my own library, and then I bought other books by the score. I desired to be confident as to every statement made by me, and to be sure as to the fitness and force of every illustration employed.

Week after week went by, and yet I was by no means ready with my sermon, or even prepared for its

writing. I made notes of the material I would like to use in my sermon ; but I found these notes expanding and multiplying beyond all my anticipations. As my sermon was to touch on all the phases of true manhood, I must know about the proper training of the body, the intellect, and the spirit of one who would have character as a true man, and hence there came much of my preliminary study.

After some eleven months of this preparation, I set myself to arranging my gathered material. In order to have it fairly before me for selection, I made a careful index of the whole, so that I might study that and then choose what I deemed the best. I then began to write. It was only after some thirteen months from the time I undertook this mission that I had a sermon ready for its preaching. As the basis of this sermon to students, I took the text and sermon-plan on which I had preached to my regiment before Richmond in the last year of the war. We had just then been receiving many new recruits and "substitutes," who needed to be taught the first duties of a soldier and a man. My words to them, therefore, were fitting words for any young man. We never get beyond fundamentals, in the army or out of it.

I mention these facts as illustrative of the truth that, although I had no formal training in a theological seminary or divinity school to fit me to preach to soldiers or students, I did not assume to give my hearers, as worth their having, that which had cost me nothing, or which I had not studied for.

That special sermon for students represents a turning-point and training period in my life, and I value it for what its preparation did for *me*, aside from what its hearing may have induced any hearer to do for himself.

Having prepared a special sermon for students, as already described, I preached it in Easthampton, in February, 1869. It seemed to interest the boys, and it was heartily approved by the instructors and other grown-up hearers. Dr. Samuel T. Seelye, in whose pulpit I preached it, was so much interested in that sermon that he wrote to Amherst, where were his two distinguished brothers, and urged that I should be asked to preach it before the college students. Accordingly, I was invited to do so.

Having re-adapted my sermon to meet the needs of older students, I preached it one Sunday morning before the students and professors of Amherst College, and by request I repeated it, in the afternoon of the same day, before the Agricultural College of Massachusetts in another part of town. It was most warmly received in both places.

Professor L. Clark Seelye, now President of Smith College for Women at Northampton, but then a professor and college pastor in Amherst College, was enthusiastic about the sermon. Writing me about it several weeks later, he said:

"The sermon which you preached to our students last term was of great benefit to them. I have never listened to a more successful exposure of those follies

to which students are naturally addicted, and about which they are also peculiarly sensitive.

"Had any member of the faculty said the same things, the effect would have been far different. It would have been regarded merely as an attempt to maintain college authority, and very likely the young men would have behaved worse than ever. It is, in fact, a very delicate matter for any one to criticise the standard of morality which is common among students. Your good humor made your plea all the more effective; and I think the moral standard of the college has been higher ever since.

"I heartily wish the sermon might be given in every college in the land."

President Clark, of the Agricultural College, who was an experienced soldier in the Civil War, and who therefore appreciated the army-chaplain standpoint, wrote of the sermon as "very interesting, and full of valuable instruction and effective exhortation. It seems to me peculiarly adapted to benefit young men in schools and colleges who are engaged in qualifying themselves for active life." He hoped I might "preach it a thousand times."

In consequence of the representations from Amherst College officials as to this sermon, I was invited to preach it at Williams College, and again at Yale. At the latter place it was heard not only by students, but by professors of the theological as well as of the academic faculty. That those who were set to train men as preachers and teachers perceived that *I* had

not learned the lessons they deemed most important to a clergyman, and that they were unfamiliar with an army chaplain's way of talking to men, was made clear in their subsequent conversations with me.

While I had evidence that both in the faculty and among the students interest in my theme had been aroused by my discourse, there was discussion for some time afterward as to the unconventional and army-chaplain style of address which I employed in the pulpit. This was clearly brought out in an extended conversation on the subject which I had with an influential member of the theological faculty. He had no criticism to make as to any error observed in the truths taught, or any lack of reverence in the spirit and manner of the preacher. Yet the utterly unconventional and non-divinity-school style of sermonizing was an evident shock to him. And, therefore, I speak of this thus fully in submitting to the public these specimens of army-chaplain-like sermons, with all their differences from the theological seminary standard of sermons.

After his full explanation of doubts on the subject, my friend, the professor, said frankly and with great kindness :

"Now do not misunderstand me, Mr. Trumbull, or think that I am criticising your sermon or your way of sermonizing. That sermon to young men was remarkable in the interest it excited and in the impression it produced. It has been a subject of conversation

among its hearers ever since. Our [theological] professors have discussed that sermon and its method with not a little interest. We never heard any sermon like it before. That you did what you undertook to do there can be no doubt. But I am free to say, that if your idea of the way to sermonize to young men is the correct way, then our way of training ministers in this theological seminary for forty years has been all wrong—all wrong." And there we two left the subject.

It may be well to mention that I told this story at the time to good Dr. Bushnell, who always had an interest in me and my work. In his characteristic heartiness he said bluntly :

"Well, Trumbull, you are right in this thing, and they are wrong."

Not all readers or hearers will agree with either Dr. Bushnell or with the theological professor as to this matter. Some will agree with the one and some with the other. Yet others again will think, with the Connecticut Baptist evangelist, that "the best way to preach is to preach every way." But out of my personal experience I must continue to think that an army chaplain would not be best fitted for *his* preaching by a strict adherence to the methods laid down in the average theological seminary.

DUTY OF BEING A MAN

Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man"
(1 Kings 2 : 2).

These were the words of the dying King David to Solomon, his son and kingly successor. They are not his entire charge, but they form its substance and, if wisely interpreted, they include its remainder. "Be thou strong, . . . and shew thyself a man"!—a fully-developed, well-rounded, complete man; every power in play, every high possibility attained. What more could David ask of Solomon?

And who had a better right than David to summon others to manliness? He was himself a man,—a man all over, and through and through,—perhaps the truest type of simple manhood the world has known; a man after God's own heart, and in very much a man after *man's* own heart: "David the son of Jesse, . . . the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23 : 1).

Never, besides, was there a mere man who so well as David "knew what was in man," and what it was to be a man. It were better said of David than of that other grand old patriarch :

"This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword,
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced with his golden pen,
On the deathless page, truths half so sage,
As he wrote down for men."¹

As "the days of David drew nigh that he should die," he turned himself on his couch, to his son and royal heir, and in parting command to him who must represent his family and kingly glory, declared: "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man"—I die. Consider my story. Shun my follies. Be encouraged by my successes. Have my courage and faith. And do a better—because completer—work than mine.

"So David slept with his fathers;" but his dying words ring down through the ages, and sound in this room to-day, as the call of God to each one of you, young men: "Be thou strong, . . . and shew thyself a man"! God asks no child of his to be *less* than a man, and he demands of none in this life to be anything *more*.

"Shew thyself a man"! That is the call that I reiterate to each of you: not merely be a saint, ready for heaven, but be a man, fitted for earth's duties. My appeal to you is not from the conviction that you must *die*, but from the thought that you may *live*. I do not so urge you to prepare for any *future*, as I do

¹ Mrs. Alexander's "Burial of Moses."

entreat you to fill your place in the *present*. "I have written unto you, young men," said the beloved apostle, "because ye are strong" (1 John 2 : 14); and as St. John's follower in the faith, I preach unto you, young men, because you are strong, and I want you to use your strength manfully.

Be strong and be men at all times and in everything,—in your studies and in your social life, in your recreations and in your worship. "David danced before the Lord with all his might" (2 Sam. 6 : 14). If you must dance, that is the way to do it,—before the Lord, and with all your might! And David prepared with all his might for the house of his God (1 Chron. 29 : 2). His manfulness, his wholeness of soul, showed itself in all his actions.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy might" (Deut. 6 : 5) is "the first and great commandment;" and many that follow are "like unto it" (Matt. 22 : 38, 39). "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9 : 10), said the inspired Preacher. And St. Paul added, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily" (Col. 3 : 23). Said the good John Joseph Gurney, writing to his son at school: "Be a whole man to everything. At Latin, be a whole man to Latin. At geometry or history, be a whole man to geometry or history. At play, be a whole man to play. At washing or dressing, be a whole man to washing or dressing. Above all, at meeting [Gurney was a Quaker], be a whole man to meeting."

It was said of Lord Brougham, that "if his station in life had been only that of a shoeblack, he would never have rested satisfied until he had become the best shoeblack in England." Thus always with true manliness,—it will show itself as surely in one sphere as in another. The student who heeds the inspired injunction of the text, will be a man alike at play, at study, and at prayer,—in the culture of body, mind, and of spirit.

1. In the care of the body, show thyself a man.

Bodily vigor is hardly less a Christian attainment than it is a source of manly pride. God has ever honored this in its place, as a possession and a charge of his children. The record stands of the first leader of God's peculiar people that he was "a goodly child" (Exod. 2 : 2), and that when he was an hundred and twenty years old "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deut. 34 : 7). And of the first king of that nation, God declares that he was "a choice young man, and a goodly : and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he : from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people" (1 Sam. 9 : 2).

That which bringeth "redness of eyes," or "wounds without cause" (Prov. 23 : 29), or pallor of cheek, or weakness of limb, is as well a sin as a shame. "Your body," says St. Paul, "is the temple of the Holy Ghost. . . . Therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6 : 19, 20). "The glory of young men is their strength"

(Prov. 20 : 29), says Solomon. Beware, then, young man, lest, like Esau, in an evil hour of weakness and desire, you barter for a mess of pottage your birth-right of glory by indulgence in what lessens your strength and diminishes your manliness.

The expressive adjective "stalwart" is but the old Saxon "stael-weordh,"—worth stealing, good for something ; leaving the unwelcome inference that he who is a not stalwart man is not worth having at any price.

"It was there that the battle of Waterloo was won!" said the Iron Duke, pointing, in his later years, to the playground at Eton, where his own great strength had been early developed. And Waterloo was not the only one of earth's struggles that hinged on the power of physical endurance.

Genius itself has been defined as "the capacity for an unlimited amount of work." It is certainly true that a man's mental activity and freeness are largely dependent on his bodily condition. "There can scarcely be a diseased or abnormal condition of any organ in the human system that will not have some influence upon the mind," says a distinguished New England physician.

Even in the highest spiritual life, a man is not lifted above the power of his body to affect his happiness. God's grace delights in his temples when they are kept undefiled for himself, with strength and beauty as their supports. Says one of our quaintest and most eloquent American divines: "Dyspepsia and

disordered bile and imperfect secretions are foul fiends, all of them, and calomel and quinine have an apostolic calling to the casting out of devils. Medicine is oftentimes a very means of grace—and a wise physician better for the soul than a whole sanhedrin of ministers.”¹

2. But, if your bodily development is a duty as a man, your mental culture is not less so.

When Solomon, as Israel's king, sought to conform to his father's injunction in our text, and to show himself a man, he asked of the Lord *wisdom* as the first requisite for his sphere. “And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing” (1 Kings 3 : 10); and the king's fame was thenceforward greater, because of his wisdom than for his wealth and glory. And Solomon's testimony as to the blessings of knowledge was: “Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it” (Prov. 16 : 22); and “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead” (Prov. 21 : 16).

Bodily strength will avail you but little in practical life, if there is no mental control of it. The muscular and brainless athlete, whose image stares from the circus show-bill, would hardly pass for a model man anywhere. “Wisdom is better than strength” (Eccl. 9 : 16). It is only to your shame if, while in the “first nine” of the ball club, you are in the last three

¹ Rev. Dr. Charles Wadsworth.

of your Greek division. If book-men look down on you, the cheers of the boating crowd ought to give you little comfort. And you may well blush if the younger classmate, who envied your power in the "giant-swing" of the gymnasium, dwarfs your class performance in the natural sciences. In the long run, the good scholar outstrips the fine gymnast. For the race of life, he whose head is level is better fitted than he whose legs are strong.

Whatever is to be your future occupation in life, you must be largely dependent for success on your brain-power. In the higher intellectual walks, this is obviously true. It is scarcely less so in the lower spheres of effort. "The best preparation for special pursuits," said President Hill of Harvard, "is a general education. It was in defense of this doctrine that Horace Mann brought forward the striking fact . . . that the wages earned by piece-work in a cloth mill were in proportion to the time previously spent by the operative in studying arithmetic and geography and grammar. Similar statistics to show the advantages of general education in special pursuits might doubtless be gathered in other departments of labor."

It may be doubted, for instance, if A. T. Stewart, the humble Irish lad, would have come to be the first American merchant of his day if he had not stood first in his class at Dublin University. William B. Astor, as the son of the richest man of his generation in this country, would hardly have held and multiplied his inherited wealth—in exception to the general

course of sons of rich men—so as to be himself now foremost among our millionaires, if it were not for the benefits of his college training. An inside look at the most notorious firm of gold gamblers and railroad swindlers in all our land,¹ would show that the obvious coxcombery and knavishness of the senior partner were pushed into a power they could not otherwise attain to through the disciplined intellect of an unprincipled Harvard graduate—a less-known member of the firm.

Henry Ward Beecher says truly: "If a man has nothing to do but turn a grindstone, he had better be educated; if a man has nothing to do but to stick pins on a paper, he had better be educated; if he has to sweep the streets, he had better be educated. It makes no difference what you do, you will do it better if you are educated."

Understand, therefore, and appreciate the practical value of a good education, you who are yet undergraduates, and see that you make the most of every instructor, every recitation, every help to mental improvement. Do not commit the folly of counting your instructor and yourself as pulling at opposite ends of a rope, or as opponents in a sharply-contested game, where an advantage over him by shirking, "ponying," or deception, inures to your profit; but look at him, rather, as your senior partner, whose experience and knowledge furnish capital for your use and benefit, and whose interests are so linked with your own as

¹ "Jim" Fisk & Co.

to ensure to you his sympathy and hearty assistance in all your intellectual endeavors. Remember that—at all events, in the study hours and at recitation—"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. . . . Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life" (Prov. 4 : 7-13).

3. *But, with body and mind both cared for, your soul, or spirit, must not be neglected if you would show yourself a man,—a man, I mean, in the present life, leaving out for the time all consideration of the eternal future.*

Some one has forcibly suggested that it is not wise for us to say that we *have* souls; for the truth is we *are* souls, and have bodies. There is a sermon in the mere title of a modern work on "The Human Body and Its Connection with Man." Our souls, or our spirits, are our immortal selves. Ourselves—our inner being—must be well considered in efforts at personal culture. As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23 : 7). "It is character," says one of our best American essayists,¹ "which gives authority to opinions, puts virile meaning into words, and burns its way through impediments insurmountable to the large in brain who are weak in heart." As good Dr. Joel Hawes, my own revered pastor, declared, "Character is the measure of the man,—is, indeed, the man. He is what his character is."

¹ E. P. Whipple.

Hence the force of Solomon's injunction, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4 : 23).

There is no pure life, no high-toned manliness, to one whose heart is not pure, whose conscience is not high-toned. Said Edmund Burke, in his plea against Warren Hastings: "I never knew a man who was bad, fit for *service* that was good. . . . The man seems paralytic on that side, his muscles there have lost their very tone and character,—they can not move. In short, the accomplishment of anything good is a physical impossibility for such a man." "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. 12 : 35).

And the character which comes out of a cleansed heart is good capital for the business of every-day life. Even for present dividends, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22 : 1). "That character is power, is true in a much higher sense than that knowledge is power."¹ It gives influence. It secures remuneration. Says a well-known English writer:² "Of two poets, otherwise equal, the Christian is the greater; of two statesmen, the Christian attains the more permanent fame; of two artists equally gifted, the Christian takes the higher place; of two merchants equally practical and far-seeing, the Christian reaches the surest success."

And the honored president of Yale University³

¹ Samuel Smiles.

² William Guest.

³ Theodore Woolsey.

said of him who would be a true gentleman: "It is true, and a most important truth, that none, however highly endowed by nature, and however lofty in his aims, can be a true gentleman, in the highest sense of the term, without that spirit of piety, and that sense of obligation toward God, by which, more than by all things else, men are assisted in the discharge of their duties to one another."¹ What more attractive, manly model is found in English history than Sir Philip Sidney? That which gave him pre-eminence, while yet a youth of twenty-one, as "the ornament and boast of the splendid court of Elizabeth," was rather character than genius. As soldier, as statesman, as poet, and as wit, he had not only peers but superiors; but "in the singular beauty of his [Christian] life," he had no contemporary rival.

Thus down to the present day "the world, despite its apparent indifference, is never insensible to the beauty of a Christian life, to the dignity of a virtuous and spotless character."² Such a character is at a premium even in Wall street, whatever sneers may there be indulged at hypocritical professions. It is but a little time ago that the sharpest knaves there were giving in excuse for their being duped by a new-comer, that he was the son of a Christian minister, and they rested on his likeness to a godly father.

Hon. Amasa Walker, in his classification of wages as a politico-economist, puts as highest and in greatest demand, moral power,—“the power which gives

¹ *New Englander*, Oct., 1847.

² *Record of Noble Deeds*.

[a man] such a control over the appetites, passions, and propensities as affords assurance that under no circumstances of trial or temptation will he ever depart from the strictest line of duty ; ” and he adds, that “ as such men are more rare than those having only physical power, or physical and mental power combined, they will command higher rewards,—the highest paid for any class of services.” It is God’s truth, verified in man’s uniform experience, that “ godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come ” (I Tim. 4 : 8).

But character can be secured, and godliness attained, only through heart-strengthening by the power of the Holy Ghost, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

As the body comes naked into the world, and must be clothed from without to bring comfort or to conform to decency, so the soul enters the world in nakedness, and must be clothed upon with the righteousness of the Crucified One : wherefore, young men, “ put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ ” (Rom. 13 : 14), else your souls will stand stark, shivering, shameful. If you have not yet been clothed with a new soul-garment, you have not yet begun to truly live ; you are not a full man in any proper sense.

“ The head of every man is Christ ” (I Cor. 11 : 13), and none “ stand complete ” except “ in him ; ” or, as it has been paraphrased by the poet :

“ A Christian is the highest style of man.” ¹

¹ Edward Young.

"Be thou strong therefore, and [thus] shew thyself a man"!

Aye! "Be thou *strong*," for it requires strength to show one's self a man. Strength is needed to get up early in the morning,—not to say, when the clock strikes or "chum" calls, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep" (Prov. 6 : 10). Strength is needed to go to bed at a proper hour, to walk merely for exercise, to bathe merely for health, to eat and drink only what is proper, and that at proper times; to turn away when the soul has appetite from the sparkling wine which is red, and "giveth its color" temptingly in the cup; to shun in the full flush of youthful passion her who "lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men;" to resist insane impulses to defile and destroy one's own body; to keep clear of the gambling group, with its exhausting excitements and its ruinous impellings; to maintain good resolutions, to break up old habits of indulgence, to trample on suddenly sprung temptations; "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit: . . . and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5 : 17); and you see a law in your members, warring against the law of your minds, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin, which is in your members (Rom. 7 : 23), and you must fight or die.

Yet fight you may, in sure hope of victory; for in the battles of every-day life no true man—young or old—is the devil's prisoner unless by surrender.

"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10 : 13). And added strength shall be yours through each new victory in your daily life-struggle. He who successfully combats temptation, compacts and hardens thereby his moral muscles; and with every succeeding triumph his eye flashes fresh brightness, and his firmer tread and nobler bearing proclaim him more the man than ever.

Good soldiers are never made without hard fighting. The grand Old Guard of Napoleon grew into glory by their service and their successes. It is said of them: "Nothing like them was ever seen when they advanced, carrying arms; with their great caps, white waistcoats and gaiters, they all looked just alike, and you could plainly see 'twas the emperor's right arm moving. He looked upon his Guard as upon his own flesh and blood; he could always replace thirty or forty thousand men by conscription; but to have another such Guard he must commence at twenty-five, and gain fifty victories, and what remained of the best, most solid, and toughest, would be the Guard."¹

So of those who fight the good fight daily with the world, the flesh, and the devil, keeping the faith in their great Captain! Their enemies only help them to more of soldierly manhood.

¹ Erckmann-Chatrian.

“Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!
All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.”¹

Or, as Job declared it: “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger” (Job 17 : 9).

On the contrary, every yielding to evil weakens the tempted one. He who has been worsted in one fight is in poorer plight for the next. And no enemy is so formidable as the one with whom a man has already made terms. “A comparatively brief and moderate indulgence in vicious pleasures appears to lower the tone and impair both the delicacy and efficiency of the brain for life,” says as practical and sensible a writer as James Parton.

He who spake “as never man spake,” declared that “that [of sin] which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man” (Matt. 15 : 11),—not merely proves his inner defilement, but promotes it externally. “We should take care of the beginning of sin,” says Bishop Wilson. “Venture all on the *first* attempt. Die rather than yield one single step,” adds Dr. Owen.

A man never gets fairly over his first debauch. One glass too much of alcoholic drinks will sometimes cause a man's conscience—if not his brain—to

¹ Longfellow.

reel for a lifetime. Once going in the way of forbidden indulgence may prove a permanent harm to character and to peace of soul. Yet *temptation* to these sins will come to you as a college student. You cannot evade the struggle, but in divinely given strength you can avoid defeat.

"Not from the strife itself to set thee free,
But more to nerve—doth Victory
Wave her rich garland from the Ideal clime."¹

To those who face temptation for the first time, and to those who meet its renewed attacks, the call of God is repeated, "Be strong, and quit yourselves like men: . . . quit yourselves like men, and fight" (1 Sam. 4:9).

As a practical matter, you should understand that in the training of your *intellect* more, by far, depends on your strength—your determination and perseverance—than on any native endowments or adventitious help of surroundings. No man bounds up the hill of science with running jumps, impelled by his genius. That ascent is made only by straightforward heel-and-toe walking, and in the toilsome travel a resolute will is worth more than a colossal brain.

"If I have done the public any service," said Sir Isaac Newton, "it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought." And Elihu Burritt adds, "All that I have accomplished, or expect or hope to accomplish, has been and will be by that plodding, patient, persevering process of accretion which builds the ant heap—particle by particle, thought by thought, fact

¹ Bulwer's Schiller.

by fact." Said Charles Dickens, on this point, "My own invention or imagination, such as it is, I can most truthfully assure you, would never have served me as it has but for the habit of common-place, humble, patient, daily toiling, drudging attention." Buffon said of genius, "It is patience." Sir Joshua Reynolds held that excellence, even in high art, "however expressed by genius, taste, or the gift of heaven, may be acquired;" and Michel Angelo believed the same as to sculpture. Said Beethoven, "The barriers are not erected which can say to aspiring talents and industry, 'Thus far and no farther.'"

Sydney Smith declared characteristically, "I am convinced that a man might sit down as systematically and as successfully to the study of wit as he might to the study of mathematics; and I would answer for it, that, by giving up only six hours a day to being witty, he should come on prodigiously before midsummer, so that his friends should hardly know him again." Giardini thought that the violin could be played by any man who would give twelve hours a day to it for twenty years; and there is an air of probability about that simple statement, for in all intellectual acquirements "the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. 10 : 4), and "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat" (Prov. 13 : 4).

Thomas Jackson's (A. D. 1647) lesson from the pawn's progress to the king-row in the Game of Chess, of two centuries ago, is as full of truth for the student now as then.

" A lowly one I saw,
With aim fixt high ;
Né to the right, né to the left, **veering**,
He marchéd by his law.
The crested knight passed by,
And haughty surplice vest ;
But onward, toward his hest,
With patient step, he pressed ;
Steadfast his eye.
Now, lo ! the last door yieldeth,
A crown his forehead shieldeth,
His hand a scepter wieldeth.

" So mergeth the true hearted,
With aim fixt high,
From place obscure and lowly :
Veereth he nought.—
His work is wrought :—
How many loyal paths be trod,
So many royal crowns hath God."

Sure it is that the more distinguished men in every department of mental effort have exercised wondrous patience in their best work. Newton wrote his Chronology fifteen times over before it satisfied him, and Gibbon his Memoir nine times. Montesquieu said to a friend, of one of his writings, " You will read it in a few hours ; but I assure you it cost me so much labor that it has whitened my hair." Titian, in a letter to Charles V., wrote, " I send your Majesty the Last Supper, after working at it almost daily for seven years." Jenner spent twenty-three years on his theory of vaccination before issuing his first treatise concerning it. Humboldt sent the outline of his *Cosmos* to

a friend just sixty-six years before he forwarded its last sheets to the printer.

Lord Brougham said to Zachary Macauley that he wrote the peroration to his speech in defense of Queen Caroline, perhaps his most effective passage of oratory, at least twenty times, and after he had for weeks been reading and meditating over Demosthenes. Tom Moore told Washington Irving that he had hunted six weeks for one word to complete his last song. Said Daniel Webster to Pitt Fessenden, of his own more brilliant forensic utterances: "Do you suppose these terse sayings were made from the spur of the moment? By no means; they were the result of study,—and close study, too. . . . The words which so fitly represent England's power, so often quoted, and so much praised, were strung together while I stood on the American side of the river, near Niagara Falls, and heard the British drums beaten on the Canada side."

If more young men would do the *hard work* of genius, there would be more results of genius in the world to rejoice over.

"The prize can but belong
To him whose valor o'er his tribe prevails;
In life, the victory only crowns the strong—
He who is feeble fails."¹

"The difference between boys," said Arnold of Rugby, "consists not so much in talent as in energy."
"The truest wisdom," said Napoleon, "is a resolute

¹ Bulwer's Schiller.

determination." Sir Fowell Buxton wrote, towards the close of his useful life: "The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between men, between the feeble and the powerful, is energy—invincible determination—a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. That quality will do anything that can be done in this world; and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a two-legged creature a man without it." Buxton held, moreover, that any man could do what any other man had done, provided he merely gave more time and energy to it, to overcome his disadvantage of natural lack. The history of many of the world's great ones tends to confirm the views of such thinkers.

Daniel Webster said of himself, at Exeter Academy: "There was one thing I could not do. I could not make a declamation. I could not speak before the school. . . . I never could command sufficient resolution." Yet when he applied the long passive *will*, Daniel Webster made a very reputable public speaker. That ought to be encouraging to the average student. Disraeli was laughed down when he made his first speech in the House of Commons. He said determinedly, when he found he could not go on: "I shall sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me." He was, by and by, the eloquent leader of that same House of Commons, and in fact of all Europe.

In 1759, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, as a pupil, "was, by common consent, both of parent and preceptor, pronounced to be 'a most impenetrable

dunce.'" Twenty-one years later the struggling dunce essayed his first speech in Parliament. So poor was then his success that a friend told him frankly, to his face, that oratory was evidently not in his line. Sheridan rested his head on his hand for a few minutes in thought, and then in vehement assertion of manly resolve, he cried, "It is in me, however, and [with an oath] it *shall* come out." It was seven years from then that the "impenetrable dunce" delivered his celebrated speech against Warren Hastings, "whose effect upon its hearers," says Tom Moore, in the biography of Sheridan, "has no parallel in the annals of ancient or modern eloquence." Edmund Burke declared that speech to be "the most astonishing effort of eloquence, argument and wit united, of which there was any record or tradition." Charles James Fox said, "All that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing, and vanished like vapor before the sun." And William Pitt acknowledged "that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessed everything that genius or art could furnish, to agitate and control the human mind."¹

Could any of you do better than that, young men? Some of you have as good a start as he had. Determination gave that dunce power.

Adam Clarke was another "grievous dunce" until his teacher dismissed him from the class in disgrace, and his seat-mate taunted him with his stupidity.

¹See Memoirs of Sheridan.

Then he was fairly aroused, feeling, as he expressed it, "as if something had broken within him." "Shall I ever be a dunce, and the butt of these fellows' insults?" he asked. Snatching up a book, he started on the road to manhood. Neither his capacity nor his progress has ever been questioned since then. Isaac Newton was backward in all his school studies until an overbearing comrade was cruel enough to kick him in the stomach. This fired him with indignant courage, and he determined on revenge through superior scholarship. He never halted thenceforward in the race of life until he had distanced every one of his fellows, and stood the foremost man on earth. It would be a sore temptation to make a similar application to many a sluggish student if one were sure that he could thus be surely projected into the Newtonian sphere of scholarship. But, while that could hardly be relied on as a method of treatment, it is true that whatever arouses a youth to a determined, manly effort in pursuit of knowledge, secures to him a higher meed of success.

Indeed, a savant of science not long ago advocated before the British Academy of Medicine the use of electricity as a mental stimulant. He cites a dunce who was "electrified" from the foot to the head of his class, and held his own there; and the learned gentleman's serious advice to instructors was to treat the lowest six in college or academy to a course of electricity—as in practical enforcement of the appeal of our text. But, young man! if you are a lagging

student, do not wait to be struck by lightning or kicked in the stomach, but "be thou strong, . . . and shew thyself a man," in resolute, patient industry in your every-day studies, and if you are not the equal of Sir Isaac Newton you will come nearer to it than you have deemed possible, for it is ever true that in the field of the mind "He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread" (Prov. 28 : 19).

In your spiritual life, when you are weak, then you are strong (2 Cor. 12 : 10). Your soul-strength must be that of the clinging vine rather than of the sturdy oak,—a strength exercised in the grip of your faith on the hand that leads you and the right hand that holds you (Psa. 139 : 10). But to such strength you are clearly called. You must "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6 : 10); "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2 : 1); strong and fearless for every duty. There is no true Christian manliness without God-reliant, earth-and-hell-defiant courage.

"According to your *faith* be it unto you!" (Matt. 9 : 29) is the assurance of God to every man who follows the Captain of our salvation (Heb. 2 : 10). "He that doubteth is damned" (Rom. 14 : 23) for all efficient Christian endeavor, and prompt and hearty discharge of duty. The divine injunction rings out now 'as of old, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Josh. 1 : 9).

“ Give me the dauntless man,
Who flinches not from labor or fatigue,
But moves right out upon the path of duty.
God will stand by the man who boldy stands
By God's commands; God will give him energy
And courage *now*, and afterwards success.”

But there is another phase of this great subject that is of no little importance. Let us look at that carefully. “ Be thou strong, . . . and shew thyself A MAN ”! *A* man—not merely mannish, human, of the race of men; nor yet alone manly and manful, but *a* man—an individual, with your own character, your own convictions, and your own course in life. The call to this individuality of being is plainly included in the text. David was enjoining Solomon to personal duties—duties which were Solomon's and no one's else. The summons to individual action is anew to every soul to whom the summons is repeated. And if there be one trait which more than another commends its possessor to the world, it is manly independence of character. This is what shows a man a hero—marks the difference between heroism and bravery.

The Swiss who followed Arnold de Winkelreid were all brave. It was the going forward *alone*, to gather the death-harvest of lances into his own great heart, that uplifted him as the hero there. Napoleon seemed never more the hero than when at Grenoble, on his return from Elba, he rested calmly on his individuality, as he pressed up to the leveled muskets of one of his old regiments which had been ordered to

fire on him, and said, confidently, "Soldiers of the Fifth Regiment! if there is one among you who would kill his Emperor, let him do it! Here I am!" David, standing out alone before the affrighted army of Israel, to defy the Philistines and their champion; Elijah, single-handed, challenging the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal to a struggle,—and thus with all the heroes, along through the following ages; St. Telemachus, an humble monk of the desert, throwing himself between gladiatorial combatants in the Colosseum, and ending in his martyr-death the brutal games he battled; Peter the Hermit, "a bare-headed, bare-footed, little, shriveled old man, mounted on an ass, wrapped in a coarse garment, girded with a rope," traversing Europe to initiate a Crusade, and drawing after him all Christendom in arms; Luther, a simple German priest, rising up to hurl defiant anathemas against the hierarchy which held the world in its grasp; Cromwell, mustering a psalm-singing, praying band of yeoman, to give battle to the skilled soldiers of the mightiest monarchy of earth,—down to gray-haired John Brown, starting up with a handful of pikes, to lead a half-dozen followers to the overthrow of a vast system of oppression, hedged in and protected by all the civil and military powers of a great nation! All these have won admiration and reverence,—often wresting applause for their character from those who condemned their course,—through their audacious personality of performance, because each one was strong and showed himself *a man*.

"One man among a thousand have I found" (Eccl. 7 : 28), said the Preacher, in his day. Has the relative number of men diminished since then? J. Stuart Mill says that no period of England's history had been so little marked by individual originality and force as his century.

"How rare men are!" said Napoleon. "There are eighteen millions in Italy, and I have with difficulty found two,—Dandolo and Melzi."

Carlyle declares of the people thronging the Strand in London, whose personal history he would like to ask of each, "No, I will not stop them. If I did, I should find they were like a flock of sheep following in the track of one another."

Of our own country, Mr. Beecher has said pithily: "We must make men now as they make masts: they saw down a dozen trees, splice them together, and wind them round with iron hoops, and thus make masts that are supposed to be stronger than they would be if each was a whole piece of timber. And so with men; if you want a good man, you have to take a dozen men, and splice them together, and wind the hoops of responsibility round and round them, and put watching bands all about them." Ah! there is truth in the cry of an earnest writer: "The great want of now is not more *men*, but more *man*; not more persons, but more personality."

Yet, if there is one weakness of man more contemptible than another, it is his proneness to seek shelter behind others in shirking the responsibility

of his misdeeds. In the sad story of man's first fall, there is nothing that goes so to sicken and disgust one with Adam as the whine of the sneaking sinner, when drawn by God's call from "amongst the trees of the garden,"—"The *woman* whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3 : 12). For shame! thus to sacrifice all manly independence, and to disown all personality of responsible life! Sad, sad, it is, that the race so generally follows Adam in his cowardice, as it does uniformly in his sinning.

Oh, the contrast between the first Adam and the last Adam—between Eden and Gethsemane! When the blessed Jesus was with the chosen of his disciples in the garden, and the multitude came out in his pursuit, he, "knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, *I am he*. . . . If therefore ye seek *me*, let *these* go their way" (John 18 : 4-8). No failure there to meet the dread responsibilities of his position! "The man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2 : 5) is alone the model. Be thou strong, therefore, to show thyself a man like him in this.

In a college or academy, where so many are gathered in close association and sympathy, there is peculiar danger to a young man of losing his individualism by merging it more or less in the mass, or in the class, or in the crowd. Many a student for instance, consents, under a pressure of class, or society,

or "crowd" sentiment, to do what his intelligent judgment condemns; and in some "bread-and-butter" (a famous Yale conflict) or "mark-system" rebellion, high-minded, even Christian, youth will say deliberately, "I didn't think the thing proposed was just right; but the class, or the college, voted it, and of course I must fall in." No, you must not, "of course, fall in," young man. If a thing is *not* just right, you must stand out against it, in spite of all odds and at any cost. "Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exod. 23 : 2), said God by his servant, Moses. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his *own* mind" (Rom. 14 : 5), was the echo of Paul. Said Athanasius: "If the world goes against truth, then Athanasius goes against the world, and Jehovah and Athanasius are always a majority."

"The world assaults? Nor fight, nor fly.
Stand in some steadfast truth and eye
The stubborn siege grow old and die."¹

Therefore, I say again: "*Shew thyself a man,*" my friend, and this I say to each of you *individually*, not to you *collectively*. Do what *you* know to be right and only that, in spite of the views of your fellows, and the votes of your crowd. Don't drink, nor smoke, nor gamble, nor visit vile resorts, nor take gates off the hinges, nor go out of town without leave, nor haze a newcomer, nor seek to annoy an instructor, nor do any other either foolish or wicked thing, because others do

¹ Sydney Dobell.

so,—not even if "*everybody* else does." But to show thyself A MAN thus, you must, indeed, *be strong*. It is hard work to do right independently. "It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion," says Emerson; "it is easy in solitude to live after our own, but the great man is he who, in the midst of the crowd, keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude." It is easier in any moving throng to go with the crowd than to go against it. Driftwood will float with the current. The brawny arm is needed to pull even the light canoe up-stream. But the current of busy life sets hellward, and if you yield to it unresistingly you will find yourself in perdition. The better way is to *choose* your course, and *pursue* it. Then, if for any distance the current runs your way, avail yourself of the popular help; but if its direction is contrary, say resolutely, as said a hero of Italy, "I had rather take one step forward and die, than one step backward and live."

You may have to bear the jeers or revilings of your companions, if you dare conscientiously to oppose the public sentiment of your little circle, as other manly men have been called to breast mightier waves of contempt or hatred in their life-struggles for the right; but in the end you will be more sure of support than you could be by any courting of popular favor.

"To thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

"He who agrees with himself, agrees with others," says Goethe; and so the heroes of the world have found it. Even Punch comes to pay tribute to the long-despised John Bright, with this meed of praise:

"And he can boast, and truly boast,
The change is not in him,
He waited, as the years went by,
Rigid, resolved, and grim.

"Thought out his thought, and spoke it out,
Nor cared for howl or cheer;
Reckless what faith his speech might win,
What hate provoke, or fear.

"Till the great tide, whose forces deep
Nor men nor modes withstand,
Bore spoils of office to his feet,
And power into his hand."

Perhaps no better single example of manly individualism can be named than the case of Granville Sharp. A subordinate clerk in a public office, without wealth or friends or scholarship, he determined to overthrow the slave power in Great Britain, to secure decisions in the courts against its rightfulness, and to influence national legislation for its downfall. With every judge and lawyer in the kingdom opposed to him, he entered on the study of law, from its very rudiments, and, while toiling daily at his clerkship for bread, mastered the great principles of legal science, searched the records of judicial decisions and parliamentary enactments, and gathered the material he required for his great purpose.

Publishing the results of his investigations, and scattering his essays widely through the land, Sharp fought his test case to the highest tribunal of the realm, wrested from Lord Chief Justice Mansfield the admission of previous error, and secured the promulgation of the decision that freed every slave on the soil of England. The result of his personal endeavors aroused, for the completion of his mighty undertaking, Clarkson and Wilberforce and Buxton and Brougham; and the contest he entered on single-handed was continued, with constantly fresh accessions of friends and favor, until slavery was abolished in all the British dominions, and then in America; and now every freedman on our own purified soil owes his liberty, instrumentally, to the movement begun by Granville Sharp, the humble Ordnance clerk, who heard the cry of God, "Be thou strong, . . . and shew thyself *a man*!" and in fearless independence rose up to breast and battle and conquer—the world.

Ah! it is glorious to be a man; to do the work of a man; to have your own convictions of duty, and to stand by them; to serve, like David, your "own generation" (Acts 13 : 36), until by the will of God you fall asleep, knowing, like Job, even while you toil and suffer, that your own Redeemer liveth, whom you shall see for yourself, and whom *your* eyes shall behold and not another (Job 19 : 25-27).

"Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man," growing "up into him in all things, which is

the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4 : 15), and coming through "the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4 : 13).

IMPORTANCE OF A HEAD TO A SOLDIER

VIII

IMPORTANCE OF A HEAD TO A SOLDIER

Many a thing that a man thinks he needs, and that he certainly wants, when he is in active army service, is not actually indispensable to him as a soldier. Bodily wholeness is certainly desirable; it is even insisted on for one who offers himself as a new recruit. Yet many soldiers have continued to do good army service after losing an arm or a leg or an eye. But every soldier must have a head. Without a head a soldier can not do service, or continue to be a man. Hence, as a head is indispensable to a soldier's very existence as a soldier, it must be retained by him at any cost.

This is true in every sphere of human warfare. Whether a soldier be in camp or on the march, in bivouac or in battle, in hospital or in army-prison, on detached service or in home life,—whatever else he has to be without, he must have a head. This is an obvious truth, but it is a truth that is not always borne in mind, even by those who have most reason to consider it seriously.

During a season of exceptional religious interest in the church of which, in my later life, I have been a

member, in West Philadelphia, I was asked by my pastor to preach for him one Sunday morning. More than fifty young persons had, within two weeks, newly entered the Christian life in that church, and others were earnestly considering such action. New recruits were, therefore, before me as I preached, and those ready for enlistment were in the congregation. My message must be one that every soldier-soul should consider, and my appeal should be as earnest and as important as I could make it. The sermon preached under such circumstances is therefore one that I desire to include in the collection of my talks to earth's soldiers, young and old, in view of their needs and duties and possibilities.

HEADSHIP OF CHRIST

I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ (1 Cor. 11 : 3).

It is the Apostle Paul who speaks these words in one of his letters to the Corinthians, and what the Apostle Paul says he wants to have known is sure to be something that is worth knowing. But apart from the fact that these words are Paul's words, they are, as I view it, the expression of a truth of truths in the disclosure of God's plans, and of man's needs and possibilities. Indeed, I know of no truth that is to be compared with this truth, in the profoundness of its philosophy, or in the importance of its practical bearing.

All that I have learned through my closest studies—in the Bible or outside of the Bible—and through my experiences and observations in a busy life among men, can be summed up in this declaration which Paul deemed worth our knowing. When, therefore, your pastor asks me to speak to you on an occasion like the present, when only the most precious thoughts are at all worthy of your attention, I can think of nothing that better represents the core of the gospel, or that better expresses the deepest conviction of my

own innermost being, than these words of the Apostle Paul, which I make my own words, as I come to you in Christ's name this morning :

"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ."

Viewing man as you will, there is no completeness to him save as he finds it in Christ. No man can live as he ought to live, or be what he ought to be, or have the hope that he ought to have, apart from God in Christ. In Christ there is a possibility to every man of the truest life, of the noblest being, of the grandest hope, conceivable for man.

Viewing Christ as you will, he is the world's center of interest and of admiration. Even apart from all theological dogmas concerning his nature and his power, Christ stands an absolutely unique figure in human history. There was never one like him before. There has never been one like him since. No character like his was conceived of until he had lived his life. When his life was lived, it became at once the standard by which all other lives were measured ; and no one now dreams of a rival to that life as a standard of moral and spiritual measurement to the end of time.

With man as man is, and with Christ as Christ is, Christ must be to the complete man all that the head is to the body, as a source of guidance, of balance, and of vivifying power. And without Christ the best of men lacks that sure knowledge, that abiding peace, and that fulness of life, which are secured to those of whom Christ is the head.

1. *"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ" in the realm of all true knowledge concerning practical duty in daily life, as well as concerning all things beyond and above the realities of time and sense.*

We talk about doing our duty, about doing right, about doing as well as we know how ; but what do we mean by all this ? What is duty ? What is right ? What is the moral standard toward which we are striving within the limits of our knowledge of its demands ?

All our well-defined ideas of duty and of right are derived from the character and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is true that long before his day there were moral laws and standards of right and duty, recognized among many of the nations of earth, or laid down in the sacred books of the ages ; but not until Jesus made clear the fuller meaning of the precepts that ought to be binding upon the consciences of men, and pointed out the errors that had blinded the moral sight of mankind, was there known to the world a fixed standard of duty, Godward and manward. Not until then was there a given standard of right, to be accepted more and more generally by all proper-thinking and well-disposed persons everywhere, in the progress of the world's advancement.

Until Jesus Christ appeared, there was, at the best, only a foreshadowing of the good things that have been realized in him. Since his appearance, the highest attainment, personal or social, reached or reached after by men, can not transcend that attainment which Jesus exhibited, and which Jesus enjoined on all.

Whatever may be your view of the development of the human race, or of human thought, it can not fairly be a question with you, that suddenly, almost two thousand years ago, in an out-of-the-way portion of the earth, and from among a people of restricted religious opinions, there appeared a world-teacher of morals and religion, who stands to-day, even in the light of nineteen added centuries of progress under the impulse of his own best teachings, a faultless teacher and a model guide ; so that when even unbelieving fancy would picture an ideal morality, it can suggest nothing better than the pattern life which Jesus lived on earth.

You can find good in the moral teachings of the ancient Egyptians, of the sages of Assyria and China and India, and of the philosophers of Greece and Rome ; but no one of you can say that those teachings are unmixed with error, or that their standards are uniformly those which you deem the correct one. On the other hand, no one of you will claim that he recognizes a flaw in the moral teachings of Jesus, or that he can conceive to-day of a higher standard of duty than Jesus held, and holds, before men. Nor can you say that such a standard is to be found elsewhere in all the earth, even in the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures—as those teachings were interpreted and applied before the coming of Jesus.

So it is that all our knowledge of personal and social duty centers in, or is derived from, the teachings and the example of Jesus Christ. “God, having of old

time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1 : 1-2) ; and thus it has come to pass that in moral and religious knowledge "the head of every man is Christ."

It is not that every man who strives to do his duty, or who is, in matters of morality, doing as well as he knows how, is conscious of the fact that he is so far heeding the counsel of Jesus ; but it is that all our modern best ideas of right and duty are derived directly from Jesus Christ. Our ideas of duty in the treatment of children, in the life we live in the family, in our social intercourse with our fellows, in our business relations with others, in our ministry to or in our provisions for the poor and the sick and the insane and the criminal, and even in our recognition of the rights of the brute creation, as well as in our attitude toward the government which is over us,—all, all are shaped and directed by the specific teachings of Jesus.

See how it was, for example, in the matter of the parental care of children before the teachings of Jesus were the recognized moral standard of the more civilized nations of the world ! Among the Greeks and Romans, when those peoples led the world's best thinking and doing, a new-born child had no right to live save by its human father's special consent as an act of grace. The infant was brought at its birth and laid at its father's feet. If the father stooped and took the child in his arms, the babe might live and be

reared at that father's expense. Otherwise it would be killed or left to perish.

Jesus, at his coming, took into his arms a little child, and made it the example and the charge of those who would show their love for him. "Whosoever . . . shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," he said. "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me" (comp. Matt. 18 : 2-5 and Mark 9 : 36, 37). That act and those words of Jesus were the turning point in the world's estimate of childhood. And now when, at the baptism of little children, the father takes the tender babe in his arms and presents him at the Lord's altar, there is a survival of the old pagan custom, with its Christianized aspect, as the father says, symbolically, "This child shall live, and shall be reared for Jesus."

So it is in every sphere of personal and social life. All true progress has been made, and is making, in the direction, and under the direction, of Christian teachings, just so far as Christian teachings are the teachings of Christ. James Russell Lowell, who would hardly be deemed a religious bigot, summed the truth in this whole matter, so far, when he said, in a public address in England not very long before his death : "When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place in this planet where a decent man can live in decency,

comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted ; a place where age is revered, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard ; when skeptics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way and laid the foundations and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical literate to move thither, and there ventilate their views."

Not long after Mr. Lowell said that, I heard Professor Drummond, the Scotch scientist, who has been a world-wide traveler and a careful student of the observations of others, quote these words, and say in addition that, if any one could show him such a field of ten miles square anywhere on earth, he would surrender his belief in Christianity as the world's only hope of true uplifting in knowledge and morals.

Is it not then specifically true "that the head of every man is Christ" in the realm of true moral and religious knowledge? Whether he realizes it or not, he who does, or who strives to do, as well as he knows how, is a far-off follower of Jesus, walking in the path of duty which Jesus first made clear. He is moving in the right direction, even though he is not moving as surely or as intelligently as he should move. Being out of Christ, he is, however, in the truest sense, "out of his head ;" for only as a man recognizes the headship of Christ can he fully know his duty, his privileges, his possibilities, his destiny.

Recognizing that headship, and conforming himself to it, the path of completed knowledge is fairly open before a man.

Jesus says to each and all of us, "If ye abide in my word [having accepted my headship], then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8 : 31, 32).

2. Moreover, "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ" in the sphere of that peace of mind which alone gives comfort, and secures the highest power, to any man in the struggles and endurances of his daily life on earth.

Knowing what is right does not in itself give peace of mind to a man. More often it is a cause of added unrest to him. He who knows what is right and does not do it, is farther from peace than if he had no knowledge of the right. He who lives wholly for himself, is never satisfied with himself. He who seeks pleasure as the end of his living, never finds pleasure unalloyed. He who would avoid disquiet of mind by turning away from all serious thought, and finding forgetfulness of God in indulgence of sin, can never turn away from the consciousness that he ought to be better, nor forget that there is an aim in life worthier of him than the aim he is pursuing.

Said a young man to me, who had been living a wild life of selfish pleasure-seeking: "No one but God knew how much I suffered, while I seemed to be always having 'a good time.' I've gone home long

after midnight, night after night, and as I crept softly upstairs toward my bedroom, I've seen the light streaming out from under my mother's door, and I've heard her low, sobbing voice in prayer, and I knew she was kept awake praying for me. Then I've gone up into my room and thrown myself on my bed, and cried as if my heart would break. I've wished I was dead ; but I've lived,—lived to do the same thing over again with the same result. And that's the life I lived for years. I tell you there is no comfort to the man who keeps on doing wrong when he knows he ought to do better!"

At the best, as God's word assures us, "The wicked are like the troubled sea ; for it cannot rest. . . . There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57 : 20, 21).

Nor does trying to do as well as one knows how secure peace of mind in every instance ; for, as a rule, such trying is not a success according to the man's own estimate of his doing. Trying to do well is a praiseworthy endeavor, but God has set before every man an ideal that is higher than his own best performance, and a man can never stand complete before God in a sense of his own real merit. Many a man who lives an upright life in personal morals, and whose heart is full of kindly purposes toward his fellows, lacks that feeling of restful peace which is the possession of him who knows that he is Christ's, and that Christ is his, and that in his well-doing as in his short-coming he is loved of God as one for whom Jesus

lived and died, and for whom Christ lives, and whom Christ loves.

Not even a purpose of being a Christian, nor the belief that one is a Christian, nor the knowledge that one is a consistent member of a Christian church, can give peace of mind to one who longs for peace. "I would have you know, that the head of every man is *Christ*;" not holy purposes, not a rich religious experience, not a formal church-membership, but *Christ*. "The head of every man is Christ;" and only he of whom Christ is the head and balance, and who trusts himself wholly to the wise and loving headship of Christ, can have peace; that peace "which passeth all understanding," and which abideth forever.

Peace comes to the believer in Jesus, not through what the man does, nor through what the man is, but through a sense of what Jesus is in himself, and of what Jesus is to every man who trusts himself to him. Peace is found by looking away from one's self, away from one's merits, away from one's lack, and at Christ as he is, and in his attitude toward the sinner. One may be conscious of great imperfections, of pitiable weakness; he may be perplexed with doubts about his purposes and motives; he may be beset by peculiar temptations, and sore-tried with afflictions and bereavements; but if he fixes his gaze on Christ in whom all fulness dwells (Col. 1 : 19), and realizes that all that Christ is, and all that Christ has, is shared by Christ with every soul that accepts his headship, peace of

mind must be a result of such gazing and such realizing (Rom. 8 : 16, 17; Gal. 4 : 7).

Peace comes from realizing that Christ is our *Head*, and not from believing that Christ is merely our *Helper*. A young Christian who had been in army service for a time, and who was now in the struggle for business success, said to me half regretfully one day: "I never have had such *peace* as I had in *war-time*. Then I was always under orders, and I accepted the state of things. Every morning the sergeant told me just what to do, and I did it. One morning it was 'drill,' another it was 'fatigue,' another it was 'policing,' another it was 'fall in for a march.' It was all laid out for me, and I had nothing to do but to obey. But now I'm in a worry to know just what I ought to do in the work which I've undertaken." The real difference with that young man in war-time and in time of peace was that in the one case he realized that he was under a competent head, while in the other case he wanted to be his own head.

"Ye call me Master, and, Lord," says Jesus: "and ye say well; for so I am" (John 13:13). He who recognizes Christ as Lord and Master and Head, can be told day by day just what to do or just what to endure in the day before him, and he can find peace in doing and enduring accordingly.

There are many believers in Jesus who enjoy peace in the consciousness of his headship, while they are in the army or while they are in business, while they are prospered or while they are afflicted. Their con-

dition has nothing to do with giving them peace, or with keeping peace from them. Their peace is wholly the result of their accepting Christ as their head. I wish I could give you even the faintest glimpse of all that I have seen of this peace of mind which Christ secures to those who trust him.

I knew, at the same time, two believers in Jesus who had the fullest measure of peace in his headship. One of them probably never had a hundred dollars at a time. His whole life was given to Christ, and he literally lived from hand to mouth in Christ's service. His face was all aglow with joy as he told me of Christ's unvarying goodness to him. "Dear Saviour," he said, "he does everything for me. I haven't a single unsatisfied want in this world." The other believer was rich in this world's goods. His property counted up into the millions. He had come into the service of Christ after the middle of life, but he had accepted Christ as his head, and now he and all that he had belonged to Christ. Day by day he was asking Jesus what he might do for him, and he was doing as Jesus directed. The light of Christ's love was in his face as he said to me one day, "I feel that I've wasted so much time in living out of Christ that I don't want to waste another minute, now that I'm in his loving service."

One of these believers had learned how to be empty, and the other how to be full, in Christ's service (Phil. 4 : 12), and both of them had learned the preciousness of peace through having Christ as their head.

And so among the poor and the rich, among the infirm and the bereaved and the disappointed and the betrayed, as well as among those who knew little of earth's severest trials, I have seen, as you have seen, those who had realized in their own experience the fulness of Christ's words to his disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful" (John 14: 27).

And the truth of those words may be realized by any one of you who will lay hold of them and make them your own to-day.

3. *"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ" in the realm of life,—the life that is and the life that is to come,—life temporal and life eternal.*

Our mortal life is a dying life, and is a life marred and hindered by sin all its way deathward. All of us want something better than this life, something more than this life; and just in proportion as we lack an intelligent and reasonable hope of something more and better, are we liable to be tossed in bewilderment between doubt and despair.

It is not because of any peculiarity of our early theological training—as some would have us suppose—that we have this unrest, and this dissatisfaction with the life that mere nature offers us, in the present condition of nature's strugglings with that form of

evil which we call sin. In all ages and everywhere the trouble has been much the same.

The choicest wisdom of the classic philosophies of ancient Greece and Rome went no farther than to seek out the best use of a fleeting life that was on the face of it a seeming failure. The Hebrew sage who had tested for himself the gain of pleasure and wealth and power and learning, could only characterize all that which nature unilluminated from without could give, as "vanity and a striving after wind" (Eccl. 2 : 26). And to-day, outside of the realm of Christianity, millions upon millions of aching hearts accept Booddhism as their religion, because Booddhism holds before them the hopeless task of practical annihilation, with a final end to living and striving and suffering and enduring.

In fact, apart from the teachings of Jesus Christ, there neither is, nor ever has there been, any proffer to man of joy and triumph in the life that is, and of added joy in life prolonged beyond the present. He who studies the various religions of the world, ancient and modern, realizes that it is a literal truth that there is not "any other name under heaven, that is given [or that has been given] among men" (Acts 4 : 12), wherein is salvation,—in a new and abiding life,—or wherein is even a promise of salvation, except the name of Jesus Christ. And he who studies the ways of men's thinkings and hopings to-day, realizes that there is no well-defined and intelligent hope by anybody of true and endless life, save as that hope is

based on the teachings and assurances—direct or perverted—of Jesus Christ.

But Jesus Christ does proffer life, life in all fulness and in all joy,—life now and life forevermore,—to every man who trustfully accepts him as the one source and the one giver of life. Jesus Christ does say, explicitly and emphatically: “He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die” (John 11: 25, 26). And more than sixty generations of believers have put that assurance of Jesus to the test, and have found it true.

Sin and death are *facts*; and even though we can not explain their presence in the world, we have to admit that they are here, and that their relation is as that of cause and effect; or that, as the Bible expresses it, “The wages of sin”—the price paid for sinning—“is death” (Rom. 6: 23). We see, and we can not deny it, that somehow in consequence of this state of things, in which “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth” (Rom. 8: 22) in the pain of sin, every man is in a dying state. Similarly, new life in Christ, salvation from sin and death, through trusting Christ, is a *fact*; and its presence in this world must be admitted by us, whether we can explain it or not. Just so surely as we can see before us the proofs that “the wages of sin is death,” just so surely can we see the multiplied and sufficient proofs that “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 6: 23).

As, on the lower plane of physical life, it is shown—mystery though it be at best—that the blood, or life, of a hale and strong man can be made to pass from his opened arteries into those of the weak and dying one, carrying new and vigorous life in its transfusion, so it is shown on the higher plane of the more mysterious but equally real spiritual life of man, that the blood, or life, of Jesus Christ can bring new and permanent life into the dying human nature of him who opens his being to its reception by faith. No fact in all the universe has fuller attestation as a fact than this. Every one of you here before me now is already a witness to its truth in your personal experience, or can be competent to be so to-day.

The life that Christ gives to those who trust him is not a life that has its beginning when this mortal life has ended, but it is a life that shows itself in fulness now and here, with a promise of larger fulness hereafter. It is bounding life for the present, with abounding life for the future. "To me," says its possessor, "to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phil. 1 : 21). "He that believeth on the Son *hath* eternal life" (John 3 : 36), says John the Baptist; not by and by he *shall have*, but now he "*hath* eternal life." Jesus Christ reaffirms this declaration in the earnest words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgement, but hath passed out of death into life" (John 5 : 24). And the signs of the Christ-life in a man are visible

in its possessor's personality at all times and everywhere.

The best student-athletes in our American colleges, as in the English and Scotch universities, at the present time, are young men who stand "complete" in Christ (Col. 2 : 10). There is no feminine grace or loveliness that by itself can compare with that womanly beauty which has its crowning perfection in the Christ-like spirit, giving added tenderness and fuller sympathy and gentler winsomeness to the look of the eye, to the tone of the voice, and to every movement of the hand or form. There is no possibility of such intellectual attainment and efficiency without the Christ-life as with it. No profession or occupation or employment can be honored at its best except by him who, with all his special fitness for his special work, can say in simple-hearted sincerity, "I live ; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me : and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2 : 20).

But it is when this mortal life is failing that the immortal life which Christ has given asserts itself yet more convincingly to the outside observer, so that often in the hour which we call the hour of death the outer face of the dying one is transfigured in the light of the undying spirit within, and the failing tones of his earthly voice catch the sweetness of the heavenly sounds which are already vibrating on his spiritual ears. This exhibit of life in death is more than resig-

nation, it is more than peace, it is more than hope ; it is the conscious joy of union with Christ ; it is the fuller sense of that eternal life which is the free gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Among the brightest life-pictures which hang in the galleries of my memory to-day are the faces of those who lived the Christ-life, and who gave proof of their immortal life in their dying hour. And some of these faces stand out in added beauty because of the very shadows which were over them in the years when life is ordinarily at its sunniest. I recall one such, the face of an aged man who was born a deaf-mute so long ago that he was already too far on in mature life to be capable of learning how to read and spell when the mode of instruction for the deaf and dumb was introduced into this country.

The best he could do was to learn the more primitive system of natural signs in the use of his hands and eyes. But by that means he was taught of Jesus ; and with all his heart, in childlike simplicity of trust, he believed on Jesus, and had life from him accordingly. Separated from home, and living mostly among strangers, with the bare necessities of life secured to him, he had little of that which we deem essential to human happiness ; but his life was hid with Christ in God, and he toiled and endured uncomplainingly until past three-score years and ten,—and then it was that I saw him last.

Being in the village where was his home, and hearing of an accident that had happened to him, I went

to see him. It was a lowly home that he was in. His bedroom was close under the roof, in the sweltering heat of midsummer. In his weakness of age he had missed his footing, in climbing up the dark stairway to his room, and had fallen, breaking his right arm, which was to him both arm and tongue. There, on his bed, in the loneliness of his suffocating roof-chamber, I found him breathing his earthly life away.

When he saw me, and recognized me as one who could communicate with him, his aged face lighted up with pleasure ; and as I made signs to him that I was very, very sorry to find him so disabled, he replied by signs as well as he could, saying that God was very good to him, and that Christ had been with him all the time, helping him to bear whatever he had to bear.

“ If God wants me to lie here a while longer,” he said, “ I will wait here patiently. But if,” and as he made this sign the life that was in his aged form was all aglow in his transfigured face, “ if Christ will let me pass out from here, I will fly away and be forever with him.”

And as he made these signs I “saw his face as it had been the face of an angel” (Acts 6: 15), and I realized that his dying life was already a foretaste of that life beyond, where “the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped ;” where “the lame man [shall] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing ;” where “they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee

away" (Isa. 35 : 5, 6, 10). And if, indeed, there were only the memory of that one face of life in death in all my life's experiences, I should never have a doubt that Christ had come into this world in order that those who trust him "may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10 : 10). And how much more of such evidence as this there is in my memory, and in all our memories !

Life, peace, knowledge ; knowledge, peace, life ; all these are in Christ, and all these Christ brings to all who will accept them by accepting him. For "I would have you know, that the head of *every man* is Christ"—of every man who will receive Christ as his head, as Christ comes offering to be a head to the headless,—to give knowledge and peace and life to those who lack them all.

If, indeed, there be one thing stranger in all the world than the fact that Christ proffers himself with all these good gifts to *every man*, it is the other fact that *any man* refuses to accept the proffered Christ, as he comes with these proffered gifts. The gifts themselves would seem to be at least worth the taking ; but the Christ who brings them ought surely to be welcome for what he is, and for what he has done for men. Apart from the question of personal *gain* through receiving him, there is the question of personal *gratitude* to him, in the memory of the love that he showed for us, while he was fitting himself to be our Saviour and our Head.

Let me tell to you an incident out of my long-ago soldier life, as illustrative—even though in only the faintest manner—of the relation toward us of this loving Saviour, and of the spirit that ought to actuate us in our welcome to him as he comes to proffer himself anew to us.

It was in the midsummer of 1863 that I was a prisoner of war in Charleston, South Carolina. Coming under the suspicion of being a spy, in consequence of an incident in connection with a visit through the lines, under a flag of truce, in North Carolina the year before, I was separated from my prison comrades of the Union army, and was shut up in the common jail among murderers and desperadoes and other criminals of the vilest class from the streets of Charleston in the worst days of the Southern Confederacy.

The condition of things on our side seemed dark at the best at the time of my capture. Battles had gone against us. Generals had disappointed us. At our latest news from the North, Gettysburg still hung in the balance. I had heard cheers in the streets of Charleston over the riots in New York City, as I was brought toward the jail. To be a prisoner at such a time, with the gallows confronting me, and not a human being to give me a word or a look of sympathy, was, you will believe, to be in despondency, if not in despair—so far as concerned the earthly outlook.

But oh, the scene in that common jail and gathering place of criminals, where I was a prisoner! I have

never had such a glimpse of the bottomless pit as there. The air itself was stifling, in the foulness of those close-shut and heated wards. But the moral atmosphere was fouler and more stifling still. Blasphemy and obscene speech poured out unceasingly from the lips of demon-like men, who glared and wrangled and struggled in that seething mass of sin-cursed humanity. Occasionally the cry of "Murder" centered all attention for the moment on ruffians who were rolling on the floor in the angry clutch of deadly hatred, and the strong arms of other ruffians were taxed in separating the bitter combatants. And all the while the air seemed fouler and fouler, and the place itself more suffocating and intolerable.

Shrinking from the encircling pollution which pressed upon me at every turn, I found my way into one of the cells opening into the court, or corridor, where the multitude thronged and swayed, and there I clambered up on to the stone window-bench before one of the barred openings through the heavy walls of the jail, and drawing up my knees so as to keep within the recess of the narrow opening, I bowed my head on those knees and gave way to my feelings in the utter weakness of despair.

I had not lost my faith in God, but I could find no joy in such a life as opened to me—or as shut in about me—there. I did not want to live any longer. I could not live any longer as I was. Even if it must be to the gallows that I should go—anywhere, anywhere, out of that hell upon earth!

And just then it was, as I huddled there in that jail window recess, with my face pressed against my drawn-up knees, that I was touched gently on the shoulder, and a kindly voice said to me, "You seem troubled, my friend. Maybe you're hungry. Cheer up. Here is some bread." I looked up, as much surprised as if a voice from heaven had spoken to me, and there just below me was the winsome face of a young man who seemed all unlike the other inmates of that place of horrors, who was reaching up to me a loaf of soft, white bread.

"Thank you, thank you," I said, instinctively. "It's not bread I'm wanting." "Oh, but you look hungry," he added. "You'll want it by and by. It's good bread." And he laid the loaf on my knees, and turned away into the seething throng, out of my sight again.

It *was* good bread, a baker's loaf, in marked contrast with our coarse cornmeal prison fare ; but that was not what I was longing for. I was, indeed, hungry. God grant that no one of you may ever be so hungry as I was then ! Hungry, but not for bread. Hungry for human sympathy, and for just such words and looks of loving cheer as that brother-man had now brought me.

As he disappeared into the crowd, I felt that a crushing weight had been lifted from me. I drew a long, full, free breath again. I dropped myself off from that window-bench and stood erect. I was a different man from a moment before. I was in a dif-

ferent place. The air seemed purer. The very walls of the gloomy jail had moved outward. Its low ceiling had been lifted higher. The whole world was another world to me. I did not want to die. I was glad I was alive, and life was worth living. And all because of that strange man's strange coming to me.

I turned after him. Pushing through the crowd with a new purpose of life, I pressed on until I found him. Laying my hand on his shoulder, I said, "Look here, my friend! Who are you? How came you here?" Not knowing who I was,—whether Union or Rebel,—he answered cheerily: "Oh, I'm a Yankee soldier. I'm from away up in Connecticut; but I'm fast down here now." You will believe that that answer brought us only nearer together. I learned that *he* also was under suspicion as a spy; but he had been longer in that place than I had been, and had better adapted himself to his condition. He was, moreover, a true-hearted disciple of Jesus, and, seeing me in my apparent need, he had come to me, with the love of Christ in his heart and a loaf of bread in his hand, and, while I was hungry and sick and in prison, he had ministered unto me,—God bless him!

In a little time I was out from that gloomy jail, and was with my fellow-prisoners of the Union army, first in Columbia and afterward at the "Libby." He who had brought me to new life and hope there was taken first to Salisbury, then to Belle Island, and after that to Andersonville. I saw him no more during the weary, dragging days of the war.

Years went by. The war was over. I was again with my home loved ones. One summer evening, as I was in my front hallway, my home door-bell rang. As I opened the door myself, being near it, there stood that man who had been so much to me in that gloomiest hour of my life in Charleston jail. One glimpse was sufficient. The past was again the present, to my mind.

What do you think I did? Shut the door in his face, and left him standing outside? Do you think I did that? Would you hear me with patience for another moment, if you knew I had done that? Do you doubt that in an instant my arms were about him, with a cry of glad and grateful welcome, and that the next minute my home dear ones were called together to give added welcome to this man to whom they and I, in a sense, owed everything? No, you do not doubt that I did just what *you* would have done in just such circumstances.

One who did infinitely more for every one of you than that man did for me in Charleston jail, is saying at this very moment: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3: 20). Will any one of you keep the door of your heart longer closed against His incoming?

DANGER OF COUNTING CONSCIENCE
A SAFE GUIDE

IX

DANGER OF COUNTING CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE

It was long before our Civil War, in the intense and bitter political conflicts between advocates of slavery and of its emancipation, that I first came to realize that a man was not sure to be doing right or thinking right when he was acting conscientiously. Then, on considering the matter more carefully, and observing my fellows far and near, I was confident that among the worst evil-doers in the world were those who were doing wrong conscientiously.

Men will lie, will steal, will pass counterfeit money, will hate their fellows, will commit murder, will do any and every vile and infamous thing that can be imagined, with full confidence that it is their duty to do so. I began to ask myself whether the common idea is a correct one, that man has a safe guide in his *conscience*. As I sought to find the truth brought out in books of ethics and moral philosophy, I gained little help or light from them. As I turned afresh to the Bible in my dilemma, I found that in this, as in so many things else, the Bible and many books on Christian ethics were at variance.

And thus I came to write and preach this sermon on "moral color-blindness," or being misled to our ruin by doing evil conscientiously. It was just after I had first preached this sermon that a new book on ethics appeared, written by President E. G. Robinson, of Brown University, in which he agreed with the Bible, although not with most books of Christian philosophy, in claiming that man is not given by nature a safe and sure guide to show him what is right in conduct and morals.

Thus finding the Bible re-enforced by at least one book of more modern ethics, I was encouraged to preach God's truth, despite popular religious opinion, on the subject of "Conscience." This sermon I preached at the Payson Church in Easthampton, Massachusetts, before the students of Williston Seminary; again in the chapel of Amherst College, and in the chapel of the Agricultural College at Amherst. Yet again I preached it at Northfield, at the opening of an annual session of the World's Student Conference in Mr. Moody's day, and I was glad thus to bring its important truth before so many young Christian workers.

MORAL COLOR-BLINDNESS

Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness" (Luke 11 : 35).

A great deal is said in our day about "color-blindness," especially in its bearing upon the efficiency and trustworthiness of railroad men. It has been found, by means of careful experiments, that from two persons to two hundred in every one thousand are unable to distinguish clearly one color from another,—some persons being so totally blind to color as to see no difference between a strawberry and its leaf, except in form ; others being confused over the varying shades of colors which they recognize as not identical.

Inasmuch as the danger-signal on railroad tracks by night is a red light, it is obviously of prime importance that an engine-driver or a switchman should be able to distinguish red from white or green, for a mistake at this point might hurl a train-load of passengers to destruction. And the perils from color-blindness are largely increased by the fact that those who are afflicted with it are likely to count their sight as good as anybody's, unless the plain truth of the matter is in some way forced upon them from outside sources.

Hence it is that our great railroad companies have latterly been in the habit of testing the vision of their employees, at the hands of skilled oculists, finding in some cases that from ten to twenty-five per cent of all their engine-drivers and signal-men were at fault in color-judging. In view of these facts the warning cry has been reiterated by the public press and by the traveling public in the ears of railroad managers everywhere, until it could not but be heard: "Beware of color-blindness! See to it that the men who guide your trains know light from darkness, know red from yellow and green!"

And on a higher plane, and in a more important sphere, this warning is the cry of the text I have chosen for our evening's gathering at the opening of this Students' Conference for Bible study: "Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness"! Beware of moral color-blindness!

The words of our text are the words of our Lord Jesus,—of him who never sounded a needless alarm, and whose warnings have always more meaning than their surface-appearing. He is speaking of the eye as the avenue of light from without to the soul within, and of the importance of keeping this window of the soul transparent and unblurred. "When thine eye is single," undivided as a light-transmitter, he says, "thy whole body also is full of light; but when it [the eye] is evil [untrustworthy through its blurring], thy body also is full of darkness" (Luke 11:34). And then, as another evangelist reports it, our Lord

adds, in recognition of the danger of such a state of things, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!" (Matt. 6 : 23.) What perils are before a soul, on its life-track, when that soul is morally color-blind !

But you may be prompted at once to ask, Does not a man know by nature the difference between right and wrong ? Has not God given to every man, in what we call "the conscience," a sure test of moral light and moral darkness ? No ! most decidedly, no ! Man does *not* by nature know what is right and what is wrong. "Conscience" is *not* in and of itself a safe guide in morals. It is not enough for a man to do "as well as he knows how," and in so doing "to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men alway." He may do all this, and yet be sadly wrong. If he is morally color-blind, a man is likely to be wrong—conscientiously.

That faculty or element in our nature which we call "conscience" is set within us as a *monitor*, not as a *teacher*, in the school of morals. Conscience tells us that we *ought* to do right, but conscience does not tell us *what* is right. Conscience lays down no law for us to observe, but it reminds us faithfully to observe the law as it has been laid down before us.

Instruction in the letter and spirit of God's law must come to us from without, before conscience can help to hold us to that law. "The lamp of thy body is thine eye" (Luke 11 : 34). To begin with, the law is outside of the body and the conscience is inside ;

hence it is that so much depends on the clearness of the eye, as a means of light, in bringing conscience and the law together. "Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law," says Paul: "for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7 : 7). Mark you, Paul does not say there would have been no sin except for the law; but that *he* would never have known sin to be sin, from his uninstructed conscience. And Paul's conscience was fully up to the average standard at the start.

Who supposes that Abraham or Jacob knew by nature that it was wrong to lie? Who believes that their consciences reproached them for having more wives than one? Jesus declared that the time would come when those who killed his followers would think, in their moral color-blindness, that they were offering service unto God (John 16 : 2). And Paul testified of himself, as an aforetime opposer of Jesus: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26 : 9).

When a heaven-sent light flashed into Paul's eyes, on his way to Damascus, he had a new understanding of the truth in Jesus; and from that time forward his conscience had a correct standard, so far, to conform to. His conscience had not changed; but his knowledge of the truth had. To be cured of his spiritual color-blindness cost Paul his entire eyesight for a season; and "a stake in the flesh" was left with him for

his lifetime. The cure of spiritual or moral color-blindness is often a severe operation, an operation from which both flesh and spirit recoil; but there is no safety until it is accomplished.

Our ancestors in this country, North as well as South, were as conscientious in slave-holding, in rum-making and rum-drinking, in lottery-running and in dueling, as they were in battling for political independence. Their consciences, meanwhile, were active enough; the trouble was in their moral eyesight.

It is said to be an authenticated fact, that godly old President Stiles, of Yale College, wrote a letter to a friend in the West Indies, proposing to send a hogs-head of New England rum in barter for an able-bodied negro slave. Still later, the Rev. Dr. Nathan Strong, pastor of my old home church in Hartford, was, as I have been told, the owner of a distillery while in the active pastorate. Not being so successful a distiller as he was pastor, he failed in the rum business, and a civil judgment was rendered against him accordingly. To evade the sheriff's execution, he was compelled to shut himself in the parsonage week-days for a series of weeks; but when Sundays came he moved out in solemn dignity, with his cocked hat and knee-breeches, and passed across to the church to preach the gospel as usual. No civil process could disturb him on Sundays. His conscience does not seem to have disturbed him, on the distillery question, any day of the week. There are churches still standing, here in New England, which were built with the proceeds

of lotteries duly authorized for that sacred purpose, at the prayerful request of ministers and church-members.

If our consciences work differently from the consciences of our fathers, on these points, it is because our moral eyesight has been trained to finer distinctions in color, under the treatment of those whom God has set to be spiritual oculists.

Even now, and among ourselves, there are those who can not see the difference between red and yellow, or between black and white, on important moral questions. Many whose moral eyesight is now clear as to the black and white, have a blur in their vision as to the yellow and red when they look at the civil rights of the Chinese or the Indian in our country. There are others who really believe that it is right to lie when a good purpose can be helped on by lying, or when lying seems a practical necessity. Men of wealth, or men of moderate means, do not always know when they are using their property faithfully and in wise prudence, as God's stewards, and when they are shutting their pockets and hearts against a call which they can not refuse without sinning. Signs of moral color-blindness or of imperfect moral vision are still to be seen by us on every side ; and mark you, also, they are still to be seen *in* us by those who test *our* knowledge of moral colors.

Be it remembered, however, that a man's thinking he sees the truth aright does not shield him from the consequences of his error. Conscientious wrongdoing is never safe doing. "Look therefore," says

our text, "whether the light which is in *thee* be not darkness" ! . And *why* look? Because in moral color-blindness there is moral peril, and you may be morally color-blind without knowing it.

The Mosaic law declared : " If any one sin, and do any of the things which the Lord hath commanded not to be done ; though he knew it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity " (Lev. 5 : 17). The lips of the loving Jesus said also of the sinning servant : " He that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten " (Luke 12 : 48)—although with fewer stripes than the conscious transgressor. The divine law runs through the kingdom of both nature and grace. " Whatsoever a man soweth,"—not what he thinks he sows, not what he purposes to sow, but what he actually does sow,—"*that* shall he also reap " (Gal. 6 : 7).

If a color-blind engine-driver mistakes a red signal for a white one at an open drawbridge, the resulting calamity is as terrible to the train-load of passengers as if he had deliberately defied a token of danger which he read correctly. If one violates the civil law unconsciously, he is not exempt from legal penalties because of his false sense of security. If a man has bought stolen goods without knowing it, their real owner can reclaim those goods at the holder's cost. If there is a flaw in the title of a man's homestead, the home-dweller can be driven from that home mercilessly. No matter what he paid for it ; no matter how much he is attached to it ; no matter how neces-

sary it is to the comfort or the safety of himself or of his family,—if his title is not sound he must leave it; he must go out, it may be, into the cold world, unsheltered and homeless. His color-blindness in reading the title does not make the false title a true one.

Nor is one's danger of misreading the signals along his personal life-course, of misconceiving the ethical requirements of the law to which he owes obedience, or of mistaking the value of his homestead title-deeds, any less in the moral world than it is in the material world. It is the gentle-spirited Cowper who emphasizes this truth in his verse:

“Man, on the dubious waves of error toss'd,
His ship half founder'd, and his compass lost,
Sees, far as human optics may command,
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land;
Spreads all his canvas, every sinew plies;
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies!
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams;
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell!
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.
Hard lot of man—to toil for his reward
Of virtue, and yet lose it! Wherefore hard?—

“He that would win the race must guide his horse
Obedient to the customs of the course;
Else, though unequaled to the goal he flies,
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.
Grace leads the right way; if you choose the wrong,
Take it—and perish.”

Ah! there is a weight of meaning in the words of

our Lord, "*Look* therefore whether the light that is in *thee* be not darkness." Look ! for a woe comes from mistaking the wrong for the right. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter ! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight !" (Isa. 5 : 20, 21)—but whose eyes are not single, and whose sight is not clear.

It is a sad thing to be serving the Devil conscientiously ; to be a scoundrel, and not to suspect it ; to be dishonest, or unfaithful, or selfish, or vile, while thinking one's self honest and true, and generous and pure ; to be starting one's self or one's companions in the way of evil, without a thought of error or danger,—a sad thing, I say, and as ruinous as it is sad.

But just what is the cause of all this trouble ? and where is its cure ? If man does not know right and wrong by nature, if his conscience depends for its proper guidance on instruction from outside, how is it that he so often mistakes wrong for right ? and how can he know the true shades of distinction between right and wrong ?

Men's consciences are at fault because of their receiving wrong instruction, and of their being subjected to wrong influences. Every person does receive instruction, and every person is influenced by his surroundings. Not every person, however, is rightly instructed or rightly influenced. Hence the wrong standards of conscience-judging.

I knew of a young girl in New York City, born blind, who, until she was eight or ten years of age, and so long as I knew of her, was utterly ignorant of the fact that she was blind. Her parents had persistently kept from her the fact that she was different from other children. All her training had in view the concealment of this fact ; and as she had never *seen*, she did not know what it was to see or not to see. She used freely the language of sight, with her own ideas of that language. She spoke of being glad to see those whom she met, and of being pleased with their looks ; of enjoying the sunlight, and the clear sky, and the fine scenery, when she went out after a storm had passed away. So little thought had she that she was walking in darkness, that on one occasion, when a stranger child spoke out pityingly, in her hearing, of her misfortune, she ran merrily to her parents and said, "There's a little girl over there who says I am blind. I think I can see as well as *she* can."

Is it strange that a child trained like that one should have wrong ideas—should conscientiously be in error—as to the differences between colors? There is a great deal of such training in the world of morals.

Oriental are taught from infancy that lying to an enemy, or where anything can be made by lying, is a duty ; and they try to attend to *that* duty. American Indians are taught that a man's character is best rated by the scalps he can show ; so they risk their lives for scalps. The Dyaks of Borneo are taught that skulls are worthier trophies than scalps ; and they "hunt

heads" accordingly. Our fathers were taught that human slavery was a divine institution, and that rum was to be swallowed gratefully as a "gift of God;" and they lived up to those teachings. How could it be that men's consciences would discern truth from error on points where their instruction had from the beginning been as much at fault as in these instances in the case of our fathers and others? Is it not indeed possible, if not probable, that in lesser points or in greater ones *we* also have been wrongly instructed on points of morals down to the present hour, and that this will be evident to those who come after us with better instruction than we have had?

Even if men are not explicitly *taught* that wrong is right, they are likely to *infer* that error is truth from the prevailing practices about them. The conscience of even the well-instructed man is, at the best, like a ship's compass; not like the polar star, at which the compass is supposed to point. The compass is safe to steer by as long as its needle points where it ought to point; but the compass needle may be forcibly deflected from the pole, or it may be drawn aside by the metallic attractions, or by the meteorological influences of its surroundings, and then, of course, it is untrustworthy.

Scotch ship-builders on the Clyde are accustomed to send their newly launched vessels fifty miles down into the open sea, in order to test their compasses away from the diverting attractions of the iron-stocked yards near their building. And, in crossing the At-

lantic, our steamships have to calculate each day, and make allowance for the "magnetic variations" of the compasses by which they steer. It would be well if all of us understood just how far from the true meridian *our* moral compass needles were deflected by the attractions of gold, or pleasure, or appetite, or ambition, or love, or hatred, or by the social atmosphere of our immediate neighborhood.

Out of all the choicer children of Judah who were prisoners in Babylon in the days of Daniel, young men who were "skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability to stand in the king's palace" (Dan. 1 : 4), there were only four who had independence and courage enough to choose for themselves what they should eat and drink, regardless of the habits and customs of the people among whom they lived ; and to prove in their own experience—as has been so often proven since—that water drunk in the path of duty is a safer drink than "the native wines" of a wine-growing country drunk in accordance with the social demands of the region.

Modern travelers commonly do not get half-way to Babylon before they conclude that it is more prudent to follow the example of the multitude, on the drinking question, than to stand out all by themselves, as did Daniel and Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego ; and so they drink the light wines of the European tables, as "everybody else does." And when they have come to that conclusion, they are in a good

state to consider further whether it is wise to be cast into a den of lions or a fiery furnace of invidious comment, rather than conform to the universal custom of the country they are in, as to times and modes of worship, as to local amusements, and as to a courteous recognition of the images which King Fashion has set up to be admired and extolled.

If, indeed, they remain at home, they are still liable to have their standards of conscience-prompting shaped for them by those who are about them. Isn't it all right to go to the theater if some of our foremost church-members go there? How can card-playing be wrong if some of our prayer-meeting leaders practice it? The dances in which the Sunday-school superintendent takes a part so freely—are they not to be counted harmless for the teachers as well? What harm can there be in tobacco-using when so many ministers enjoy their cigars? Who can put up another business standard than the generally accepted standard in business? If the party methods of the *best* political party are not to your liking, where can you look for purer methods? And so all along the scale of morals.

As, when one holds to his eyes a bit of colored glass, he sees through it the whole face of nature tinged accordingly,—paled with the sickly blue, flaming with the glaring red, or softened with the refreshing green,—so they who look at customs and methods through the medium of their local public sentiment, receive within themselves, through the window of

their eye, only the hue of moral light which colors that public sentiment; and all things at which they gaze are blue, or red, or green, accordingly. "But they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding" (2 Cor. 10 : 12). The light that is in them is dimness, if not indeed darkness.

In view of all this, however, what hope is there of our knowing clearly the right from the wrong? How can we have a correct standard for our conscience-promptings?

God is the source of moral light. The revelation of God in his Son and in his word, gives to our consciences their only safe standard and guide. He who uttered the words of warning in our text, "Look therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness," said also, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8 : 12). Of the Scriptures he said, "These are they which bear witness of me" (John 5 : 39). His prayer to his Father for his loved ones was, "Sanctify them [keep them holy] in the truth [within the limits of truth]: thy word is truth" (John 17 : 17).

The knowledge of God's truth came originally from without, through the eye, into man's inner being for the right instruction of his conscience. Nor is there a human being who has not before him some vestige of God's primal revelation of his truth; some gleam on his conscience of "the true light, even the light

which lighteth every man, coming into the world" (John 1 : 9). And, however small may be the measure of this light remaining to others, *we* have it available in all its fulness and purity.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa. 119 : 9). "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Psa. 19 : 8). "The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light" (Prov. 6 : 23). "Moreover by them is thy servant warned" (Psa. 19 : 11).

I have said that the conscience is like a compass; but, in another sense, it is like a chronometer,—the watch used at sea in determining a vessel's longitude. The chronometer is not itself the true standard of time; but it is conformed as nearly as may be to that standard, and then its rate of gain or true loss is carefully noted, in order that true time may be learned from it. A wise shipmaster is jealously watchful of that piece of delicate mechanism, on which depends his knowledge of his bearings and the safety of his navigating. Before each voyage it must be newly rated by the great central light of day; and at all times it must be tenderly handled, and shielded from harsh jarring, lest its nicer adjustment be destroyed.

Thus, also, should man's conscience be set by the true standard of the Sun of Righteousness, rated frequently by the Bible record, and guarded watchfully, lest by harsh using its accuracy be lost, and the soul be in mid-ocean without a guide. Unless you

know how much your conscience-chronometer slows or quickens in the various latitudes where you sail, you will never be able to learn your bearings accurately or to lay your course correctly across the sea of life in your voyage homeward.

When your conscience would justify you in getting even with one who has wronged you, and in "giving him as good as he sent," take a fresh look at the Bible injunction: "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19), and observe that your conscience-chronometer runs ahead of the Bible standard just there.

If you find, by the Bible teachings, that one-tenth of your income and one-seventh of your time belong to the Lord absolutely and outright, to begin with, and that your hold on the other nine-tenths of your income and six-sevenths of your time is not that of unconditional ownership, but of conditioned Christian stewardship, then see whether your conscience-chronometer does not run pretty slow in that latitude. A rating up of Christian consciences generally, by this standard, would add ciphers pretty fast at the right hand of benevolent contributions. There would be little trouble then about the support of missionaries or the building of new churches.

You may have been accustomed to feel that you had only *yourself* to consider in all questions concerning dress, or diet, or amusements; whereas the Bible

lays stress on your duty in such things, in view of the tender consciences and temptability of weaker disciples about you; since "we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15 : 1); therefore, "It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth" (Rom. 14 : 21). Recognizing the falling-off of your conscience-chronometer at this point, have the discrepancy in mind in all decisions of duty.

Understand, in fact, at every turning-point of conduct, that "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14 : 12); and let your cry, at every such time, be to your Saviour,—not to your conscience, but to your Saviour: "Shew me *thy* ways, O Lord; teach me *thy* paths" (Psa. 25 : 4); for "I esteem all *thy* precepts concerning all things to be right" (Psa. 119 : 128).

"The opening of thy words [to the eye] giveth light [to the conscience]; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psa. 119 : 130). From the precepts and principles laid down in the Bible, you can learn (under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who inspired that Book, and who is ready to make its teachings plain) your personal duty on any point of morals in question. God's "commandment is exceeding broad" (Psa. 119 : 96), his "testimonies are wonderful" (Psa. 119 : 129). "Thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that

is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh. 1 : 8). Your conscience, fairly rated by that standard, will be a conscience that can be depended on.

But, mark you! your conscience must be conformed to what *you* find to be the Bible standard,—not to the standard which some one else says is set up in the Bible. "Let each man be fully assured in his own mind" (Rom. 14 : 5). "To his own lord he standeth or falleth" (Rom. 14 : 4). For example: as to all that I have said, incidentally, in this discourse, concerning various personal and social habits and customs, I would not have your opinions shaped merely by mine; nor would I have you accept on my affirmation any spiritual teaching as a teaching of God's word.

Do not, I beg of you, think that is wrong to drink wine, or to play cards, or to dance, or to use tobacco, or to go to the theater, or to lie, or to be mean, merely because I seem to think so. Do not, on the other hand, think that any one of these things is right and proper merely because some persons else—even some thousands of Christians—evidently think so; nor yet because you have yourself long indulged in that thing "without any qualms of conscience." "To the law and to the testimony" (Isa. 8 : 20) as to all these things, and as to the principles underlying them. If you are still to approve them, let it be because you find them approved by the word of God; not because your mind inclines to them, your neighbors practice

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them, or some minister insists that they are all right. And so let it be concerning every other point in this discourse, or in any other address which I may make to you here or elsewhere.

Moreover, during all the time you are here in this Students' Conference for Bible-study bear in mind that error as well as truth may be—doubtless will be—proffered to you by those who are set to be your leaders in this study, and that you have it laid upon you to decide for yourselves just what in the words of these teachers is God's truth, and just what in them is man's error. Remember that you are here to learn how to study the Bible so as to find its true teachings, not to be told by others what you are to find in the Bible as its true teachings. You have a right, for example, to feel that everything which our dear friend Mr. Moody says to you is worth hearing and is worth considering, but you have no right to feel that anything which Mr. Moody declares as God's truth is to be accepted as God's truth merely because Mr. Moody deems it so. Nor would he have you rest for a moment on his words as always sure to accord with God's words, although he always means to have them thus.

As in the case of Mr. Moody, so in the case of every Bible teacher; what he says to you may seem like Bible truth, and yet not be Bible truth; it may be approved by your conscience as Bible truth, and yet not be Bible truth. And this thought it is that ought to deepen your sense of personal responsibility as you

bear a part in this Students' Conference for Bible-study. A question of questions for each of you individually is, Is the light that is in me light, or is it darkness? May the Holy Spirit guide you every one into all truth!

DUTY OF MAKING THE PAST A SUCCESS

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DUTY OF MAKING THE PAST A SUCCESS

It was while I was doing my work as a chaplain in the Lord's army among young men in the schools and colleges of our country, that I was led to consider the truth as taught in the Bible and in human experience that we have practical duties toward those who have gone on before us, as well as toward those who are coming after us. This truth, with its correlative duties, grew on me in its importance. I came to press it again and again on the young, with the ever added responsibilities which they should feel.

This sermon also I preached at the opening of an annual session of the World's Student Conference at Northfield. An incident in connection with that preaching touched me deeply. My son, a then recent graduate of Yale, was at that Conference. He came to me and said, "Father, that truth lays a new burden on me. I have been thinking of the importance of my doing well, on my own account, before God. But I had never thought before that if I fail you will suffer by it, not merely in your feelings, but in your reputation. That gives me an added incentive and stimulus to right-doing."

I was more than glad, I was profoundly grateful, that I had preached that sermon. In the hope that its truth may stimulate some other son to a similar view of his duty, I publish it herewith.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PAST

God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect (Heb. 11 : 40).

To God's children, the present is better than the past. Aye; and the past waits on the present for its completion by God's children. That is the truth that is suggested by this text, with its correspondent suggestion of our duty of making the incomplete past a success in the present.

This eleventh chapter of Hebrews, of which our text is the closing verse, is a sublime exhibit of the surpassing power of a godly faith, illustrated out of the history of the ages. Its inspiring imagery is borrowed from the Isthmian games of ancient Greece; and the whole force of the chapter can be realized only through an understanding of the locality and the main features of those games.

Between cultured Athens and commercial Corinth stretched the "Isthmus," or "Bridge of the Sea," a neck of land connecting Peloponnesus, or the modern Morea, with the continent of Europe. There, at the narrowest part of the Isthmus, between "the winding shores of the 'double sea,'"—the gulf of Lepanto,

or Corinth, on the west, and the Saronic gulf and Grecian Archipelago on the east,—was the place of these biennial games. Eight miles to the southward lay the splendid and wicked city of Corinth, with its magnificent temple to Aphrodite, or Venus, crowning the lofty height of the Acrocorinthus, at the foot of which the new city of money-making and lust was built. Beyond this height rolled the mountains of Peloponnesus. Thirty-five miles or more, in an air-line to the northward,—out of sight from the Isthmus, but distinctly seen from the Acrocorinthus,—was Athens, in its intellectual pride and its architectural glory, its Acropolis surmounted by the Parthenon and clustering temples, while towering above all was the far-famed bronze statue, by Phidias, of Athenæ, or Pallas, or, more familiarly, Minerva Promachus; its burnished surface, as it stood in gigantic proportions with its upraised spear and shield, flashing back the sunlight, and visible from fifty miles away, on land or sea, as the protecting divinity of Athens and Attica. Away beyond loomed up the snow-clad peaks of Parnassus and Helicon.

Here on the Isthmus, with these classic surroundings, was a stadium, or race-course, of the usual six hundred feet measurement. Here also was a theater for the "legitimate drama" of that day. The amphitheater, for gladiatorial contests, was nearer the city. Here again was the great temple of Poseidon, or Neptune, in honor of whom the Isthmian games were celebrated, and at whose feet the victors bowed to

receive their honors. From the stadium to the temple was an imposing avenue, lined on one side by the statues of former victors in the games, and on the other by a row of pine-trees, from whose boughs were woven the wreaths to crown the conquerors. The contests of racing, wrestling, and boxing, and with swords and spears by foot-men and from chariots, were here witnessed each alternate spring, by vast multitudes from the neighboring cities and from all along the Mediterranean coast beyond.

Notwithstanding the heathen character of these Isthmian games, there was a nobler side to them, in contrast with the effeminacy and self-indulgence which marked the life of the Corinthians generally. The contestants must all be of pure Hellenic stock, free from the taint of crime, above suspicion of bribery. They must deny themselves during at least ten months of preliminary training, being careful in diet and temperate in all things. When they came to the contest, their whole being must be in the struggle, or all their training would be found fruitless. To win the fading crown of pine they must count not their lives dear in its comparison. And if they won it, they were applauded and admired by the surrounding multitude. Their names and the names of their fathers—whom their victory now honored—were sounded aloud by the herald. Their statues were soon to be added to the long row between the race-course and the temple. They were now an example to those who should come after them.

Do you not now see the imagery of the Isthmian

games in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews? The writer of this book, be he Paul or Apollos, clearly is familiar with these games and their surroundings. He places himself and his readers at the entrance of a spiritual stadium. Looking up along the avenue of the ages which leads to the temple where sits the presiding Divinity of the contest, he points to the statues of former victors in this course, which line the way thitherward, and recalls the memory of their spirit and achievements. Look at them ! he says.

There is Abel, of the oldest family of earth, first among conquerors through faith ; his voice rings inspiringly in our ears to-day. Enoch ; what a walk was his, and what a reward ! Noah ; why, he stood out against the world, and the whole earth was his inheritance and his triumph. Abraham and Sarah ; did they lose anything through their self-denial and their trust ? And Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph ; do you suppose they are sorry that they passed over this course victoriously ? Moses, leader and lawgiver, with richer treasures than those of Egypt for his possession ! Joshua, heroic and successful soldier ! Rahab, rescued from death and yet worse, because of her simple-hearted faith !

“And what shall I more say ?” as the long line glows and grows in the extending vista ; “for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah ; of David and Samuel and the prophets : who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of

lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens. Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, more-over of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword: they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, evil entreated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth." Could ever anything be grander than this array? Is not there a line of heroes to glory in, and to admire?

But the writer to the Hebrews has a practical end in view in all his reminiscences. He has no thought of pointing out the achievements of the past only that they may be wondered over. Remember, he says, that these men and women of long ago began a good work which they left for us to carry on. They looked forward with keen desire to the coming of our present opportunity, but they died without attaining it,—“God having provided [or, foreseen] some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect [or, complete].”

Then, as if he saw the spirits of these heroes of faith leaning over the battlements of heaven, and cheering the present contestants to the completion of the

course which they had begun, he raised his voice in the clarion call: "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight [or, all cumbrance], and the sin which doth so easily beset us [or, which so entangles our feet], and let us run with patience [or, with constancy] the race that is set before us [in this stadium], looking [up the statue-lined way] unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith [our starter and sustainer in this course], who [when he ran this race] for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and [in the heavenly temple yonder] hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

There is the lesson of this portion of Hebrews. There is its call to you and to me this evening. The past is ever dependent on the present for its highest value and its completest efficiency. Unless you and I do our duty, all that went before, in the line of our life and labors, is a practical failure.

What profits it that David has prepared with all his might for the house of his God, unless Solomon is faithful in carrying forward the temple building? Suppose a church was founded in Laodicea; if the followers of the first converts there prove but lukewarm and self-satisfied, the best labors of the beginners shall be fruitless to posterity when the church itself has ceased to exist. How came there so different results from the early coming to New England of the Norseland navigators, and the later following of the

English Puritans, except that the children of the Northmen took no advantage of the discoveries of their fathers, while the descendants of the Puritans have maintained and extended the Puritan faith and the Puritan works?

It would be of comparatively small account in history that the Declaration of Independence was signed, and that the old State House bell rang out the joyous announcement of that fact on July 4, 1776, if July 4, 1892,¹ were not to show a nation in any sense worthy of that beginning, worthy of the living and the dying of its founders and its defenders. Any cause of the fathers is a "lost cause" when the children are untrue to it. It is ever God's plan that the work of those who went before should not be made complete without the work of those who follow after.

It is right that the grandeur of the historic past should be recognized in the present, but only in order that its inspirations may tell on the work of those who are now making their place in history. Said Napoleon, at the head of his army in Egypt, "Soldiers, from those pyramids forty centuries look down on you." But Napoleon had not brought his soldiers there to study Egyptian monuments or memories or mummies. He had hard fighting for them to do; and he called on them to do it bravely and well, as in sight of the "cloud of witnesses" of the forty foregoing centuries, the work of which he had come professedly to improve on and complete.

¹ This sermon was preached on the eve of the Fourth of July.

There is something uplifting and expanding in the sense of a "historic consciousness," in the thought that we belong to a race, or a nation, or a city, or a church, or a college, or a family, with a noble history. But if this sense of a historic consciousness satisfies us, if it lessens our determined purpose to live up to, and to carry forward, and in our sphere to improve on, the history already made in this line, it would have been better for us never to have had it.

It is all very well for a young man to say that he is in an academy or a college where Thomas Jefferson, or Archibald Alexander, or Horace Binney, or Noah Webster, received his early education. But the practical question is: Is that institution of learning to gain, or to lose, in its reputation, through having that young man as a graduate, in the line of this succession? Unless, indeed, he does his part as well as the more famous of the old scholars there did theirs, he will not only gain nothing through their repute, but he is actually aiding to dim the luster which their names gave to his *Alma Mater*.

And as to your family, my young friend, if you are doing more nobly than your grandfather did, you may rejoice that he lived an honored life; but it were better for you to have been a Bushman of South Africa, and improved your privileges, than to belong to one of the best old families of Massachusetts or Virginia, and not improve on its record. The question is not whether you are proud of your grandfather, but whether your grandfather would be proud of you.

It is a good thing to be in a family line which had a fine start long ago, and has been and still is improving, generation by generation. It is a sad thing to be in a family line where the best men and women were in its former generations.

Some years ago, as I met one of our distinguished Union generals, I asked that I might bring my son to take his hand and have his greeting, so that he could remember it in the years to come. As, with his consent, I introduced my boy, he said to him: "Charley, I'm glad to see you. I hope that you will grow up to be a man, and that you will make a good man,—a great deal better man than your father." "That's right, general," I said; "if he isn't a better man than his father, both of us will be failures." There is no other way to look at it! Your and my lives will, in the main, prove a failure unless our children do better than we do. Our parents were measurably a failure unless we carry forward their lives and their life-work toward perfection.

Some years ago, in company with a distinguished friend of mine, I was presented to Josiah Quincy, then one of "the solid men of Boston," an ex-mayor of the city, and an ex-president of the state Senate. He was a son of President Quincy of Harvard University, a grandson of the Revolutionary orator, a brother of Edmund Quincy the writer, and the father of the poet Josiah Phillips Quincy and of General Samuel Miller Quincy. As my friend gave expression to our satisfaction in meeting one whose honored name and

whose honored family name were so familiar to us, Mr. Quincy said, with gracefulness and modesty: "Personally, I have done little to command public attention; but I am linked with those who have. I am perhaps best known as the son of my father, and as the father of my sons." Such a family as that is in the line of true progress, its members of each generation making available the better things than those of former days, which God has provided for them, and without the wise use of which the work of their fathers would not be made perfect.

The Chinese exalt this idea of the value to their ancestors of the well-doing of the children, so that it becomes a main feature of their religious system. They hold that the happiness of all those of former generations is dependent on the fidelity to their memory, and the attention to their wants, of those who come after them. Even the emperor, "Son of Heaven," as he is styled, declares in his hour of most solemn worship, "My thought is to carry out the aims of those who preceded me, thus ensuring the gift of long prosperity for thousands and tens of thousands of years." Every success of a Chinese youth is supposed to increase the dignity of all his ancestors; and if his father be still living when he carries off any great competitive honors, the chief award is made to the father, rather than to the son.

Is there not a certain reasonableness in this way of looking at the matter? When a young man rises up above the common level of his fellows, he lifts on his

shoulders, as it were, the former generations of his family into a new prominence before the world. How old Captain Ezekiel Webster grew in public esteem when his son Daniel was fairly in the practice of law! What could have honored Mary the mother of Washington in comparison with the career of the son of her love?

Think of this, young man just setting out in life! Consider your part in making the work of your parents, and of those who were before them, a success! Is not here an added stimulus to exertion? Perhaps your mother toiled to secure you an education. Her face wrinkled, and her hair whitened, and her strength lessened, in her effort to make provision for you. And now comes the question, Was she using her time and strength to good advantage? That question it is for *you* rather than for her to answer; God having provided some better thing concerning you, that apart from you her work should not be made complete.

Every son of a dead mother, or of a dead father, here this evening, has a responsibility, not alone for his own success, but for the success of that dead parent, in his coming life-struggle. By his love for the dead let him be faithful in his day.

"He mourns the dead who lives as they desired."

Why, the completest life which the world ever knew left somewhat of its filling out to be done by those who should come after! Paul, speaking of his

sufferings for Christ's sake, and for the sake of Christ's church, says: "I . . . fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1 : 24). Or as St. Augustine puts it, in applying this truth to every disciple of Jesus: "Whosoever therefore thou art, if thou art a member of Christ, whatsoever thou sufferest, was lacking to the sufferings of Christ. Therefore that suffering of thine is added because it was lacking; thou art filling the measure, not making it flow over. Thou sufferest so much in thyself as was to be poured in the universal passion of Christ, who suffered in our Head, and who suffers in his members,—that is, in us. The whole measure of suffering will not be filled up till the world comes to an end."

"Strange words! and even stranger thought!
But yet to inspiration due;—
We 'fill up that which is behind'
Of all the suffering Jesus knew.

"We are thy body, Lord, and what
As man thou didst not undergo,
Thy suffering members still supply,
To 'fill up' what thou didst forgo.

"And so, O mystery of love!
'Tis ours to prove, by kindred mind,
This deepest fellowship with thee,
'And fill up that which is behind.'"¹

Your sorrow, your disappointment, your bereavement, your struggle with temptation, Jesus could not

¹ Mary K. A. Stone.

himself meet and bear for you while he was in the flesh; therefore he left them for you to bear for him. And as with his sufferings, so with his labors. Jesus could not teach your Sunday-school class, as he sat by the shores of Gennesaret. He could not visit that poor mother whom you know of only a short distance from your home, as he walked up and down the land of Palestine with weary feet. He could not watch by the sick-bed of your dying neighbor, while out on the mountain he continued all night in prayer to God. These labors of love were not for him to complete, God having provided some better thing concerning you, that apart from you his labors should not be wholly performed.

And you who have not yet accepted Christ's offer of salvation,—if such a one should be here this evening,—just think of all the past which waits on your decision for its completion! The whole plan of redemption, in its marvelous story from the first promise in Eden to the ascending into heaven of our crucified and risen Lord near Bethany; and well-nigh nineteen centuries of Christian history and Christian effort; and all your training thus far; every prayer which has been offered for you; every sermon which you have heard; every word of warning or invitation which has been spoken to you; every lesson which you have read out of the book of God,—all, all is yet imperfect and incomplete, so far as you and your salvation are concerned; all, all will, so far, be a failure, unless your submissive, trustful voice shall say, "Lord,

I believe; help thou mine unbelief." What interests out of all the past, as well as what consequences for all the future, are involved in your decision concerning your personal salvation! And Jesus himself waits lovingly for your answer to his invitation, "Come unto me," that in your coming he may so far see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

How this great thought—of our part in making all the past a success—does uplift and ennoble the fact of life and of living! We stand as it were between the centuries, the hope of former ages as of future. How much to the universe may depend on our fidelity and courage in the doing of present duty, here and now!

Beginning this new session of these Students' Conferences here at Northfield, we have a measure of responsibility for all the conferences of this sort that have preceded this. It is for us to show in our spirit and ways and words whether those earlier conferences were wisely planned and managed, and whether the work undertaken by them was work that was worth planning and worth doing: "God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

"Noble things the great Past promised,
Holy dreams, both strange and new,
But the Present shall fulfil them.
What *he* promised, *she* shall do."

And "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

TRUSTING BETTER THAN WORRYING

XI

TRUSTING BETTER THAN WORRYING

A marked difference between good and disciplined soldiers and new recruits or soldiers poorly trained, is in the readiness with which, on the one hand, they obey orders or wait where they are stationed until they receive orders to move elsewhere; or, on the other hand, chafe in inaction and incline to complain because their commander does not do differently. This was a practical lesson impressed on me in my army-life.

Later I found that the same difficulty is as common in civil life as in military. And there is more sympathy with one who worries than with one who quietly trusts. In my observation and my reading I have found that the majority see more good in bustling, fault-finding, inefficient Martha of Bethany, than in calm, restful, competent, and true Mary, who knew her place and filled it, who understood her duty and did it.

To my surprise I found many eloquent preachers and many learned commentators ready to disagree with Jesus where he commends trustful Mary and rebukes bustling Martha. This newly convinced me that, in camp and field, in home-life and in ordinary

business, the qualities that have approval with great earthly commanders, and with the Captain of our Salvation, are not popular qualities. In view of this I wrote and preached this sermon, which I always found to be unacceptable to my hearers, but which I desire to have preserved as expressing my view of the positive teachings of Jesus, and of the uniform duty of his disciples.

MARY A BETTER HOUSEKEEPER
THAN MARTHA

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her (Luke 10 : 38-42).

This is a very familiar passage of Scripture, but a much abused one. Few Bible incidents are more commonly misconceived in their explicit teachings than is this interview of our Lord with the sisters at Bethany.

Jesus, on his way to Jerusalem from the east of Jordan, had reached the little village of Bethany, on the southeastern slope of the Mount of Olives, near

its base, not quite two miles from the Holy City. Bethany was the home of Lazarus and Martha and Mary, all of whom Jesus loved tenderly (John 11 : 5). Their home was one of his homes,—a home of sacred friendship to him; a home where he was always welcome, always sure to give and to receive the affectionate sympathy of a friend. It is in connection with that home in Bethany that we know more of the tenderer side of the human nature of Jesus—more of the social qualities of the Son of man—than from any other portion of his life-story.

On this occasion of his coming, both sisters wanted to do Jesus honor. Mary recognized him as Master and Teacher, and promptly took her place at his feet—the Oriental position of a pupil—to hear and to heed his word. Her first thought was of learning his wishes. Her first desire was to do as he might direct. But Martha had plans of her own. She was sure as to what ought to be done in that house that day. Without stopping to learn what Jesus wanted, she began to work and to worry in the line of hospitable provision for her friend and guest. To Martha the restful inaction of Mary at such an hour seemed strangely unseasonable. In the natural freedom of a real friendship, but in a pettishness that was none the more excusable for being natural, Martha came to Jesus to tell him of her personal trouble and to ask his help out of it. “Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.”

Now, if Martha's view of this case was a correct one, Jesus knew it. If Mary was at fault, he was aware of that. If both were right,—each after her own sort,—with different way of doing God service, and of honoring the Son of God, Jesus did not fail to understand it accordingly. If, however, Jesus took sides with either sister in this variance of opinion, he had a good reason for so doing. Jesus never made a mistake. What course did he pursue? "And Jesus answered and said unto her" (speaking in the kind familiarity of a trusted friend), "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled [full of worrying anxiety] about many things." *That* wasn't right. Jesus taught his disciples to have no anxiety, or worrying care, concerning what they were to eat, or drink, or wear; and to let not their hearts be troubled. "But *one* thing [one thing only] is needful," he added; "and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Mary here is in the right place, and at her proper work just now; and she must not be interfered with.

It is just at this point that there is such a widespread reluctance to admit the plain truth of this Gospel passage. Martha had a house to look after, it is said; and no house will run itself. There is work to be done in it every hour. With company to entertain, it will never do to sit down with folded hands, in the morning, leaving the arrangements for the day all unattended to. Was not Martha right in feeling a burden which Mary ought to share? Busy housewives

and sorely tried mothers are inclined to sympathize with Martha in her anxieties and in her complaint, and to wonder how anybody can count Mary a model woman for this matter-of-fact world of ours. Husbands and fathers also are likely to feel that Martha was on the right track for a housekeeper, and that Mary ought not to be set before their wives and daughters as a pattern.

These opinions on the merits of this case are by no means unnatural. They have a certain show of reason about them. But the difficulty with them is that they are not consistent with our Lord's evident view of the matter. Jesus did commend Mary, and did rebuke Martha. If *he* had not expressed himself on the question, it might be called an open one; but as it is, those who would champion Martha in her conduct must admit at the start that they disagree with their Lord as to prudence and duty.

Christian commentators, unwilling to assert that our Lord was in error, unwilling to affirm that because he was a man he never could understand the work and the trials of a woman,—yet unprepared to accept the apparent truth taught in his rebuke of Martha,—have variously endeavored to explain away the obvious sense of his words by strained renderings of the simple text. Some say that Jesus sought to assure Martha of the few temporal wants of himself and his disciples. “Do not be anxious,” they understand him to say, “to spread a great dinner of ‘many things’ for us to-day. A single dish is all that we

require." And so the "one thing needful" is limited in its application to a dinner bill of fare! Such a perversion as this would seem too trifling for serious mention, were it not that so many have accepted it as reasonable. A yet more common incorrect application of the one thing needful is to the salvation of the soul. By those who hold this view, Mary's choice is called wise for eternity, even though she neglected the things of time. She was preparing for a place in heaven, however poorly she filled one on earth.

Others again consider that both sisters did well in their way. "Martha was *well* employed," says a distinguished divine; "but Mary, on this occasion, *better*." In the same line of thought, one of the best approved modern commentaries declares: "The one [sister] represents the *contemplative*, the other the *active* style of the Christian character. A church full of Marys would be as great an evil as a church full of Marthas. Both are wanted, each to be the complement of the other." Only think of it! A church full of the sort of person approved by our Saviour as great an evil as a church full of a sort disapproved by him! The idea of this commentary—and it is perhaps a popular idea—is that Martha was the sensible, active, efficient matron who did the housework in the Bethany home, while Mary was a fair candidate for a nunnery cloister, a devout and weak sister, who found comfort in *thinking* about good things, instead of *doing* them.

Away with all such misconceptions and distortions

of the text as these ! Jesus meant what he said,—just what a little child would understand from his words. Martha was wrong in being anxiously worried over the many things in her household duties ; wrong in thinking that it would be a loss of time to stop and receive counsel and instruction from Jesus while he was in her home. Mary was right in trusting her Lord and Master utterly ; right in her readiness to wait when he said wait, and to act when he said act. Mary was doubtless a better housekeeper than Martha. She probably did more work in a day, and did it better. Martha's worry did not lighten her burdens, nor do her work. On the contrary, it increased her burdens and delayed her work. Bustle is never the test of true efficiency. Faith never hinders wise service. The housekeepers in this congregation—or in any other—who do most work, and who do it best, are not those who bluster and complain most, nor are they those who count time taken for prayer and for communion with God as lost time. The Marys are always the best housewives, as well as the best church-members. There is no gain for the life that now is—nor for any of its activities—in following the example of the restless, care-filled, over-anxious, impatient Martha.

Suppose you had just hired a new servant, and you told her to stand before you while you gave her directions concerning the work you had for her to do. While she waited patiently, listening to your words, suppose another of your servants should rush into

the room, declaring that it was washing-day, and almost dinner-time, and she couldn't be expected to do all the kitchen work alone at such a time, and that you ought to send out that new girl to help her. Which of those girls would you count the best servant? the one who did, or stood, as you directed, or the one who chafed restlessly under your way of managing your own affairs? The error of those who think that Martha's course was better than Mary's, is in forgetting that Jesus was Lord and Master—as well as Friend—in that Bethany home, and that both sisters ought to have shown themselves his willing—and, if necessary, his *waiting*—servants. Martha *called* Jesus both “Lord” and “Master” (John 11: 21, 28). Mary showed by her conduct that she so considered him.

To illustrate from another and more active sphere; for this lesson is not to housekeepers only: A soldier's chief duty is to obey orders. This involves, at times, the waiting for orders. I have seen the officers and men of a veteran regiment lying inactive on the ground in the hour of thickest fight of a day of bloody battle. The roar of artillery and the rattle of musketry were heard on every side. Charge and countercharge were made, with ringing cheers, at right and left, along the sharply contested lines. Shot and shell passed over, or fell among, the reclining soldiers. The dead and wounded were carried past them to the rear. Frightened stragglers from battalions already in action, and timid orderlies and aides,

carrying messages hither and thither, told nervously how "everything was going against us," and wondered why *this* regiment was not ordered forward. Yet all the while the waiting soldiers seemed free from anxiety. They drank their coffee, or munched their rations, or read home letters, or chatted with one another, or even slept.

But their inaction was not because they were unsuited, or unwilling, to have a share in the engagement. They were simply "in reserve." They were waiting orders. Meanwhile they trusted their commanders. They had no worry; no care beyond their responsibility. The first call of their colonel, "Attention!" would bring every soldier of their number to his feet, ready to do or to die in the contest, and that long quietly waiting regiment would be worth more in a fight than a whole brigade of worrying soldiers who doubted the skill or thoughtfulness of their commanding general, and were afraid that he had waited too long before calling them, or would fail to use them to best advantage now that they were in action. So always in God's service :

" Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best ; his state
Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest :
They also serve who only stand and wait." ¹

"Wherefore," says the apostle to the soldiers of Christ, "take unto you the whole armour of God, that

¹ Milton.

ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand " (Eph. 6 : 13). " In your patience possess ye your souls " (Luke 21 : 19), says Jesus. " Here," says the disciple whom Jesus loved, " Here is the patience and the faith of the saints " (Rev. 13 : 10).

Martha lacked patience because she lacked faith. Mary had a faith which showed itself in patient waiting when waiting was in order, and would have shown itself to like advantage in patient household work had such work been then her duty. Remember that it was this same Mary who, on another occasion, brought so costly an offering of love to Jesus as to startle the calculating disciples by its extravagant lavishness (Mark 14 : 3, 4; John 11 : 1, 2). Remember that it was of her that Jesus declared, " She hath wrought a good work. . . . She hath done what she could,"—done her utmost; and " Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her " (Mark 14 : 6-9). Of what other woman's work was there ever such a record ?

Whether it were giving, or doing, or waiting, that Jesus asked for, Mary was ready. He knew best what was her duty of the hour, and what were his wants. Lovingly, restfully, she was at his service, and this it was that he commended in her so heartily.

" Christ never asks of us such busy labor
As leaves no time for resting at his feet;
The waiting attitude of expectation,
He oftentimes counts a service most complete.

"We sometimes wonder why our Lord doth place us
 Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure,
 That nothing we call work can find an entrance;
 There's only room to suffer—to endure!

"Well, God loves patience! Souls that dwell in stillness,
 Doing the little things, or resting quite,
 May just as perfectly fulfil their mission,
 Be just as useful in the Father's sight,

"As they who grapple with some giant evil,
 Clearing a path that every eye may see!
 Our Saviour cares for cheerful acquiescence,
 Rather than for a busy ministry."

This is the blessed teaching of the incident of the text. Let us recognize its application to our individual needs.

"But one thing is needful." "One thing." What thing? Mary had it. Martha lacked it. We ought to want it. Just what is it? Implicit faith, restful trust, in the Lord Jesus Christ, is this one thing needful; needful in the greatest matters, needful in the least; needful at one time, needful at all times. To begin with: This faith—this resting one's self on the Lord Jesus Christ—is essential to salvation.

We can not save ourselves. We must be saved—or we must continue lost. All of us have sinned. "The wages of sin is death; but the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). This truth is the distinguishing feature of Christianity, of the religion of the Bible. Mark that!

He who studies most closely the "science of comparative religions," can find in no sacred books, of old faiths or new, anything to show a Saviour of sinners except the story of Jesus,—Jesus in prophecy, and Jesus in history. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men" (Acts 4 : 12),—even proposed or suggested,—"whereby we must be saved."

Think for yourselves! What is the grand, distinctive peculiarity of the Christian religion? It is not the purity of its moral code; not the prominence it gives to unselfish love for others; not the inducement it offers to men to live for eternity. Christianity has power through all these features. Yet in false religions there are glimpses of the same great truths. The exceptional and glorious characteristic of Christianity—separating it utterly from every other religion—is its presentation of a Redeemer for the lost. Yes! the truth of truths in the Bible is, not in the Ten Commandments; not in the Sermon on the Mount; not in the Golden Rule; not in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, or of the Good Samaritan; not in the description of the City of God; but it is in the story of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners.

It was to the young man who claimed to have kept all the commandments from his youth up, that Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest" (Mark 10 : 21). The "one thing" which the young man lacked was the "one thing" which Mary had chosen,—a willingness to give up everything—one's self, one's plans,

one's possessions, one's occupation—to Jesus, and to trust him utterly (Matt. 19 : 21). The young man was as willing to work as was Martha, but he could not trust like Mary. Whatever else a sinner has, if he lacks this one thing he has no safety. Only Jesus can give salvation. “He that believeth on him [trusteth himself to him] is not condemned: but he that believeth not [trusteth not] is condemned already, because he hath not believed [not trusted] in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3 : 18). Remember that these are the words of Jesus himself. They are words of truth; God's words.

And this implicit faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which is essential to salvation is the only thing on which our salvation depends. This is clearly implied in the words of our Lord in the text, “*But one thing*”—one thing only—“*is needful.*” The one *needful* thing is the *one* thing needful. It is the only thing needful, because it includes all else that is of importance. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16 : 31). These were the words of the inspired Paul and Silas to the inquiring jailer of Philippi. They are as true now as then; and they state fully the terms of salvation to every lost sinner seeking to be saved.

Of course, a man must realize that he is lost, or he will not seek to be saved. There can be no salvation unless there is something to be saved from. But he who knows that he is lost, and wants to be saved, can have salvation by simply trusting himself to Jesus as

his Saviour. Saving faith has been well defined by Dr. Bushnell as "that act by which one person, a sinner, commits himself to another person—the Saviour." That is all there is of it—the "one thing" needful.

Oh! how many sinners who want to be saved are like Martha, "careful and troubled about many things," when "but one thing is needful," and that one so simple. They are troubled lest they are not enough troubled. They are afraid that they are not enough afraid. They question whether they know enough about all the questions which will force themselves upon every one who thinks at all of religion. They let the fact that they are sinners stand in the way of their faith, when in truth they could not be saved unless they were sinners. They worry over doctrines, or duties, or feelings, or experiences, when all the time they might be like Mary sitting in restful peace at the feet of Jesus, hearing gladly his word.

And now one step further. Implicit trust in the Lord Jesus Christ is needful, and is the one thing needful, to give us success and peace in meeting the duties and trials of every-day life.

We—and when I say "we" I mean to include all those who look to Jesus as their Saviour—we are quite as dependent on Jesus for protection and guidance and supply hour by hour as for the hope of eternal salvation. "The Father had given all things into his hands" (John 13 : 3), "and by him all things consist" (Col. 1 : 17). What can we feel capable of

doing, or of holding, without his consent and assistance ?

Just at this point is where Mary's discipleship was satisfactory to Jesus, as Martha's was not. Martha recognized Jesus as the Messiah. She trusted him in what she counted his sphere. Had she been dying she would not have doubted him for then, and for thenceforward. But she felt no dependence on him in her daily household work. *That* was her burden, and not his. She was, indeed, out of patience with Mary for looking to Jesus for direction and counsel before dinner was ready. "I enjoy Christian exercises," she might have said, "as much as anybody, at a proper time. I like spiritual communings when I have leisure for them. But work is work, and religion is religion. It is no time to talk religion when work presses as it does in this house just now." To Martha, Jesus was a Teacher and a Master only with reference to things spiritual—in their time.

Mary's faith in Jesus was, on the other hand, all-inclusive. She believed that he knew better than she what she ought to do, and when and how. He would not, she was sure, let any lack remain through her inaction when he bade her wait. She drew no such line of distinction between work and religion as would keep them apart in her daily living and doing. She could get along without divine help no more easily in the kitchen than in the parlor ; in her home than in the sanctuary. She would be, in either place, at the call of Jesus. She would trust him absolutely in both.

Ah! it was Mary—not Martha—who trusted and best served God in every-day life. Mary was the practical Christian woman; Martha was the speculative one. Mary's religion was good for seven days in the week. Martha's was good for the Sabbath, and for week-days—after her work was done. When her brother Lazarus was dead, Martha wished that Jesus had been at hand. When dinner was to be made ready, she only wanted Mary. Yet her need of Jesus was no greater, and her rest on him should have been none the less, in the one case than in the other. This lesson was included in our Lord's rebuke of Martha when she complained of Mary.

We are all prone to divide our needs into two classes: Those where we must have God's help, and those where that does not seem so essential. The little boy who wanted to ask God to take care of him nights, but didn't think he needed to pray mornings, "because he could take care of himself day-times," was a good deal like the rest of us in counting God's protection and ministry more necessary at one time than at another.

Many Christians who will pray earnestly for forgiveness of sins, for strength against temptation, for support in sorrow or trial; and who will call on God for safety in personal danger, or for restored health in sickness,—never think of going to Jesus trustfully for instruction and assistance in training their children, in curbing their own tempers, in improving their speech and manners, in managing their business, in

doing a difficult task—balancing a cash account, driving a spirited horse, learning or teaching a lesson, choosing a place of summer resort, buying a coat, trimming a bonnet, finding a servant, or making a loaf of bread. But who shall say that any one of these things is beneath our Saviour's notice—if it is of importance to one of his disciples? Or who shall affirm that any such thing is within our sphere of unaided control?

"Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?" (Matt. 9 : 5) asked Jesus, when he stood ready to cleanse a guilty soul, or to cure a diseased body. He asks the same question now, of those who feel their need of him in spiritual things, but think they can take care of themselves in things temporal. If you can answer the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," why can not you also grant the petitions, "Forgive us our debts," and "Deliver us from evil"? The words of Jesus on this point to his disciples are, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15 : 5).

It is because so many Christians who trust Jesus in greater things fail to trust him in the lesser, that their religion appears to such disadvantage in their ordinary daily life. Martha showed a far more lovely spirit while struggling under a sense of her brother's loss than when perplexed in preparing a dinner. And, as a bright New England preacher has suggested, "Many a man's Christianity could stand burnings at the stake, which would fail over a burnt biscuit, or a bad cup

of coffee.”¹ Even wives who sympathize with Martha in her worry will be inclined to admit the truth of this statement concerning the average Christian husband. But what a low estimate it is of the grace which is in Christ Jesus that limits its exercise to great occasions, or that doubts its potency outside of the spiritual realm. God’s love is no more to be restrained in the one direction than in the other. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8 : 32.) Why should we distrust God’s readiness to supply our minor needs, since he has given us unasked the costliest treasure of the universe?

As a Christian disciple, you have no more right to worry about your household work, your business, or your profession, than you have to worry about your salvation. Worry of any sort is out of place in a follower of Jesus. It is a load we have no need to carry. One of my little daughters brought to me, a while ago, a quarto geography having on its cover a picture of fabled Atlas, bearing the globe on his shoulders. Pointing to the over-burdened man, with his bowed head, up-strained shoulders, and distended muscles, staggering under the weight that seemed just ready to crush him, she said, in pitying sympathy, “Papa! why don’t that man lay that thing down?” “Well, my dear,” I answered, “it would be a great deal better if he did. But that man has the idea that he must

¹ President Foss of Wesleyan.

carry the world on his shoulders. There are a good many men of that sort, as you will find when you are older." That child's question is a pertinent one to any of you who are struggling under an oppressive burden of personal anxiety of any nature whatsoever. "Why don't you lay that thing down?" "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee" (Psa. 55 : 22). It is not always the work that is to be given up, but it is the worry about it. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," says that Jesus at whose feet Mary sat trustfully, "and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11 : 28). Why will you not heed that invitation, and so "find rest unto your souls"?

But may we be sure, you perhaps ask, that this invitation includes all the ordinary burdens of daily life? that it is not limited to spiritual things? Hear how our Lord explains it. "Therefore take no thought,"—retain no burden of anxiety or worry,— "saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matt. 6 : 31-33). Not much doubt as to his meaning there!

But all this was to the personal disciples of Jesus, you say, while he was here in the flesh, working miracles for the benefit of his loved ones. We can look for no such wonderful help as he gave to them in

their need. How was it with Martha? The personal Jesus was there, in her home. He who had fed five thousand with five loaves, and four thousand with seven loaves (Matt. 16 : 9, 10), was her guest and her friend; yet she was in a fret lest dinner should be lacking for a household of less than a half-dozen.

Ah! it was a want of *faith*, not of *sight*, that was the trouble with Martha; that is always the trouble with a worrying disciple. If only Martha had had Mary's trust, she would have found time and inclination to listen to Jesus,—dinner or no dinner. The promise of Jesus to his disciples is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28 : 20). He is working wonders continually for those who trust him. There are multitudes who, through faith in him, do live without worry, who do Martha's work in the spirit of Mary. *You* ought to be of that number.

Lord! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26 : 3),—because he trusteth in thee! Not because everything runs smoothly is the believer kept in perfect peace, but because his trust is implicit in Jesus, who is over all and in all, however things run. When things go wrong in his family, or in his business; when he is misunderstood or slandered, or betrayed; when he is in sickness or in sorrow, in loneliness or in want; when duties and responsibilities multiply,—he can trust the Lord for sympathy, for support, for guidance; can trust him to provide

for him and for his, and to bring good even out of what now seems only evil. When, on the other hand, all is bright in his home and in his friendships, and his business prospers, and his influence extends, and he has health and honors and opportunities,—he can trust the Lord to give him wisdom and grace to fill his place acceptably, and to use his possessions properly. He can, indeed, say with Paul, in all heartiness, “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. 4: 11-13).

PERIL AND POWER THROUGH
TEMPTATION

XII

PERIL AND POWER THROUGH TEMPTATION

Early in my Christian life I learned that no place of spiritual privilege lifted one above the possibility of temptation. A disciple is liable to be tempted to special sins while on his knees in prayer, or while engaged in effort to win a soul to Christ, and even while sitting with his fellow-disciples at the table of Communion with his Saviour.

This truth I found confirmed in my chaplain experience in the army. In consequence, I desired to caution Christian soldiers to be on their guard at all times against the ever-watchful enemy of their souls. I preached in New Berne, North Carolina, in 1862, a sermon on the subject of "Peril and Power through Temptation," as based on the story of the temptations of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 4 : 1-11. This sermon, for which I made notes, but which I did not write out, I preached again in Columbia Jail, in 1863. Yet later I preached it to my regiment before Richmond, in the spring of 1864; and I then repeated it, near the same place, before the Eleventh Maine regiment of my brigade.

The truth of this discourse I had occasion to emphasize in prayer-meeting talks and in personal conversation with young believers, at various times, as the years passed on. But not until nearly forty years from the time of its first preaching did I write out this sermon for preaching in a home pulpit. My earliest notes, however, gave me reminder of the illustrations as I first gave them, and as I wrote them out twoscore years later. The sermon here given is practically the same as preached in the camp of my regiment in New Berne, in 1862, soon after I joined my regiment as an inexperienced chaplain and untrained preacher.

I wrote it out for preaching in the pulpit of my pastor, Dr. Dana, in the Walnut Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. But before the day came when I was to preach it, I was stricken down, and became practically a "shut-in." So this sermon, as thus written out, was the last sermon of my life-work, and after being thus written out, it was never preached.

ADDED DANGERS WITH ADDED BLESSINGS

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4 : 1).

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." "*Then!*" When? After he had been baptized of John in the Jordan, and the heavens had been opened above him, and he had had a new glimpse of their glories, and he had seen the Spirit of God coming down upon him from above, and he had heard the loved voice of his Father speaking out of the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "*Then,*" just then, "was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."

Marvelous record! Strange time for such an event! Yet this is the Gospel story.

For thirty years Jesus had been living the lowly life of a carpenter's son in Galilee, with no evidence in his surroundings that he was heir to a throne,—himself a king, and the Son of the King of kings. If, in those long years, Jesus had at times been tempted to be discouraged, or to doubt, or to be impatient, it would not, indeed, have seemed to us very strange or improbable; but now, when he was

newly uplifted in spiritual privileges, it does seem strange.

Yet, strange as seems the fact, it is a fact; and we may well learn a lesson for our own course in life from this experience of him who is our Example as well as our Saviour. If he was approached by the tempter in an hour of a spiritual uplift, we must expect to be.

1. Spiritual privileges are often accompanied by special temptations.

It was while the Hebrews were "fresh from the miracles of the Red Sea and the Nile," and were encamped before the very mountain that flashed and smoked with the signs of God's presence, that they were tempted to make a golden calf and to bow down before it in worship.

It was from the very supper of the covenant love of Jesus with his disciples, that one of those disciples went out to betray him. Jesus had just given to Judas the sop, or dipped morsel, which was a token of favor and fidelity, and it was "after the sop" that Satan entered into Judas (John 13 : 27).

As it was in Bible times, so it is in our day. It is when we might suppose ourselves freest from spiritual peril, that we have need to watch against special temptation. Now as always, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10 : 12).

A young soldier came to my tent one day in war-time,—the Civil War I refer to,—with a heavy heart.

"Chaplain," he said, "I'm discouraged. It don't seem to be any use trying to be good. This morning I got up before sunrise, and went outside the camp into the woods to pray. I asked God to help me do right to-day. I had a good time in prayer. I came back into camp feeling pretty strong for the day. But some one got me mad before breakfast, and soon I was swearing and cursing as if I'd never prayed at all. It doesn't seem as if praying helped me a bit."

That young soldier was simply finding that a temporary spiritual uplift does not raise one above the danger of temptation. The fight is from the beginning to the end; it is now in days of peace as it was in war-time.

A disciple of Christ often finds that he is specially tempted as he goes from the prayer-meeting or the Communion table, or from an hour of peculiarly precious intercourse with his Saviour in private devotion. Nor is this to be in any degree wondered at.

John Newton says, "It is the man who is bringing his dividend from the bank door who has most cause to fear the pilferer's hand." It is the full purse, not the empty pocket, that is attractive to the plunderer. Or, as an old divine says, "The Devil strikes at his foes, not at his friends."

There is a sense in which it may be said that the nearer we get to the summit the harder we have to struggle for the overcoming of difficulties in our upward spiritual journey. This may seem discouraging to one who is just setting out in the Christian life;

but those who have been longest on the road will be readiest to admit this truth.

“ ‘ Does the road wind up hill all the way ? ’

‘ Yes, to the very end.’

‘ Will the day’s journey take the whole long day ? ’

‘ From morn to night, my friend.’ ”¹

Yet who would have an easy time slipping down hill, in preference to a hard time struggling upward ?

“ *Then* was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil,”—then, when he had reached a lofty height of spiritual privilege.

2. Temptations may come of a most unexpected character.

This was so in the case of Jesus. “ *If thou art the Son of God,*” said the tempter. The first suggestion was to doubt the Father’s word, as if it were “too good to be true.” So it has been with children of God since that day.

The divine record stands, “ Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth (Num. 12 : 3). Yet, when he had reached the zenith of his spiritual power as a leader, Moses yielded to the temptation to lose his patience with the people whom he led, and in so doing he dishonored God before them at the rock of Kadesh (Num. 20 : 7-12). Who would have thought it ? Who can doubt it ?

Elijah was a bold and daring hero-prophet. He

¹ Christine G. Rossetti.

defied king and priest in behalf of his God. He met and vanquished the hosts of Baal, putting all their priests to the sword. Then when, in the hour of spiritual triumph, he seemed above an ordinary man's weakness, he was tempted to discouragement and despair, and he fled like a coward before the threats of a woman, and he wanted to die because life seemed not worth living (1 Kings 18, 19). Who would have thought it! Who can doubt it?

Peter was the "rock-man" among the apostles. His confident cry to his Master was, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended" (Matt. 26 : 33). And when he was explicitly warned of his peril in this direction by that Master, Peter "spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said they all" (Mark 14 : 31). Yet that very night every one of those confident disciples forsook Jesus, and fled in fear for their safety; and Peter, who began by drawing his sword in defence of Jesus (John 18 : 10), actually stood trembling and lying and swearing before a servant girl, within sight of that Master for whom he declared he was ready to die (Mark 14 : 66-71). Who would have thought it? Who can doubt it?

When Jesus was transfigured on the mount (Matt. 17 : 1-13; Mark 9 : 2-13; Luke 9 : 28-36), there appeared Moses and Elijah with him, and Peter had accompanied him to that place of privilege. All these had known what it was to meet temptations of

an unexpected character in connection with exalted spiritual opportunities. Can any later disciple of Jesus confidently hope to escape similar trial in this life? "A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord" (Matt. 10 : 24, 25).

Temptations are likely to assail us on our strongest side, or rather on what we deem our strongest. We are, indeed, more likely to be on our guard against what are our known weaknesses; but we may be over-confident or careless where we feel strongest. This it is that causes our special danger from unexpected temptations.

When a man says confidently, "If the Lord will guard me at other points, I can take care of myself with reference to this, or that, particular sin, because I can never be tempted in that line," that man needs watching, or rather he needs to watch himself. He does not know himself, and he may not even be known by his fellows.

"Beware of Peter's word!
Nor confidently say,
'I never will deny the Lord,'
But, 'Grant I never may.'"

A loved elder of this church who has entered into rest, and who was honored and looked up to by others than myself, newly impressed this truth upon me by one of his wise utterances. He was one of the clean-

¹ W. Cowper.

est and purest spirits I ever knew. It was, therefore, something of a surprise to hear him say frankly, as he spoke of himself:

"I never hear of a sin or a crime committed by any man, however shocking or horrible it may be, without the feeling that *I* might be capable of doing the same thing if I were tempted to it."

Yet that frank confession, because it was a frank confession, only gave me added confidence in that noble man. It was because he had no trust in his own goodness of nature, or purity of life, or rich spiritual experience, and was not therefore thinking that he stood firmly, that he was all the less likely to fall.

As we ascend the pathway of life, we do not rise above possible and unlooked-for temptations. We ought not to feel that because we have never been tempted in a certain direction, therefore we never shall be, any more than we should because we have been tempted many times in a certain line, and have as often resisted the temptation.

Many a soldier of earth, officer or enlisted man, who has fought bravely through a dozen battles, has shown himself cowardly in the thirteenth. Many another who has been courageous in the thirteenth has been tempted not to be so. Any old soldier will tell you that this is so, even if he cannot explain it. As long as we live the life that now is, we are liable to encounter temptation, and we have no right to feel that we are sure to keep up even to our own highest

level of hitherto. Any man's life is likely to have surprises in the temptation line, even to the day of his death.

Yet, just here, we ought not to ignore the encouraging fact that

3. Temptations triumphed over are a means of new strength.

There is no sin in being tempted. It is distinctly declared in our text that Jesus was at this time "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Surely the Spirit of God did not err in leading Jesus to where he would meet temptation; nor did Jesus sin in following the lead of the Spirit of God into the place where temptation was to be met. Sin is in yielding to temptation, not in meeting it in the path of duty where God would have us go.

There was a gain to Jesus, as our Saviour, in meeting and battling temptation. He understands our case the better in consequence. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2 : 18). He can "be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," since he hath been "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4 : 15, 16).

Similarly there is a gain to *us*, not in encountering temptation, but in triumphing over it when we are called to meet it in the providence of God. A man grows strong, not weak, by exercise. His character, like his muscle, gains power through effort and strug-

gle. Strength and beauty show themselves in the form and face of the man who has fought and conquered, without giving way through weakness to temptation, as they cannot appear in one whose God-given and God-kept spiritual faculties have never been called into exercise and tested. Manly virtue is more than childhood's innocency, as God sees it, or even as man sees it.

We are not, however, even in view of this truth, to seek temptation, or to meet it unnecessarily. When Jesus was asked to cast himself down from the temple pinnacle in order to be held up supernaturally, he declared that we must not put God to a test just in order to be a gainer by God's help. Temptations come often enough to us at the best—as many as we need to meet.

It was after Jesus had had his struggle with temptation that he taught his disciples to pray, "Lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13; Luke 11:4). That clearly enough indicates our duty, whether we understand the reason for it or not. Yet we are also able to "count it all joy when" we "fall into divers temptations" (Jas. 1:2) in the God-led path, because of the good result that may follow our resisting. There is no contradiction in these two things. It is not the man who is longing for a fight who is bravest in a fight. The bravest man shrinks from a battle, unless he realizes that it is his duty to go into one. Then, indeed, he may rejoice that he can do good and get good through his fighting and his victory.

God is more interested in us than we are in ourselves. God understands us better than we understand ourselves. God will measure our strength and our temptations if we will follow as he leads. He knows just what temptations we are best fitted to meet, or are to be the greater gainers through resisting. Thus it is now; thus it ever has been in our course. "There hath no temptation taken you [at God's call] but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but [he] will with the temptation also make a way to escape [or supply the means and power of resistance], that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10 : 13).

Many a tempted believer has come to feel the truth of this. Out of my own experience I can bear testimony to it. At one time, while I was engaged in special religious work, I found myself tried and tempted in an unusual way. I could not account for it. I had often been before, as I have often been since, tempted in ways that I *could* account for only too well; but this was a different matter. It gave me unrest and perplexity day and night; and neither prayer, nor effort at calmness of mind or spirit, seemed to be of any avail.

At last, in my worry, I dropped on my knees before God, and cried out to him for help. I told him that I was being drawn aside from his work to battle with a temptation that I was not responsible for, and which was in a direction where I had no inclination to go

astray. I said that it forced me to a struggle that seemed unnecessary, yet was very real, and I asked him if he would not give me relief from the struggle, so that I could be wholly in his work which so pressed just then.

And God's answer seemed to come even while I prayed. God said—that is, God impressed upon me the truth—that he *could* at once relieve me from that struggle with that temptation; but which would I prefer, present relief with the loss of the added character through the struggle, or a continuance of the struggle, and of his grace sustaining me in it, with the result of more manhood as a consequence?

Instantly I replied, in my heart, "Lord, let it be as thou wilt. Give me added manhood, even if I have to fight temptation all the time in order to get it."

As I then rose contented from my knees, I found that the temptation was gone, and so was the worry. It may be that it had already done its work for me for then—as God saw my case.

God will give us gain through conquered temptations if we will but trust him utterly—as we have need to. And this brings us to the thought, or the truth, of our hope of triumph when we are tempted.

4. Victory over temptation comes through a sense of weakness.

Even Jesus, after his victory over his temptations in the wilderness, said with reference to his dependence, while in his humanity, on his Father as the

source of all strength, "I can of myself do nothing" (John 5 : 30). Yet, on the other hand, Paul says confidently in his dependence on that same source of help, "I can do all things [that I ought to do] through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4 : 13).

Paul learned that lesson out of his own trying experience, as he tells us. When he prayed for more strength of his own for God's work, God's answer was, "My grace"—not your strength, but "my grace is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect [or complete] in weakness" (2 Cor. 12 : 9). God is readiest to help that child of his who feels that he is so weak that he can not get on without God, not the one who thinks he is strong enough to fight through alone.

When Paul had learned this lesson, he was ready to say, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. . . . For when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12 : 9, 10). Nor was Paul the only child of God to realize this truth. It was thus with those who went before him, and it has been thus with those who have come after him. "Time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets : who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11 : 32-34).

Feeling a sense of his weakness in himself, and resting confidently on Him who is mighty, not only to save but to uphold, day by day, the child of God can meet every temptation which he encounters in the path of duty in ordinary daily life, whether it be a common temptation or a temptation as unlooked-for as it is severe. He may have resisted the temptation many times before, and yet have to fight the old fight over again. He may never have met it until now, and therefore be surprised that it comes in just this shape at this time. In either case his strength is found in his sense of his weakness, for when he is weak then is he strong. God will give him victory through faith.

There is yet another case which makes a harder fight than either of these. Temptation is sometimes fiercest when a man or a woman has already given way to it until the will is weak to resist the often indulged propensity. Yet God can give strength to one who has fallen seven times, or seventy times seven, and that soul may yet have victory, if it will but turn again and cling trustingly to the arm that is mighty to save in even that emergency.

Let me give an illustration of this truth that was impressed on my mind most forcefully, as I heard it told by John B. Gough many years ago.

Mr. Gough was, on one occasion, lecturing to the outcasts of Glasgow, gathered to hear him by the city missionaries, with the assurance given by the civil authorities that no one should be arrested while in

quiet attendance there that evening. The provost of the city was by Mr. Gough's side on the platform.

The roughest and vilest of the city were there. A woman, popularly known as "Hell Fire," was among them. The city provost told Mr. Gough that she had been arrested scores of times, and she was so violent when drunk that he never sent one policeman alone to arrest her. She sat before the lecturer and listened to his words. As he told of the curse of rum, and of the sufferings of the drunkard, she cried out, "True, mon. It's a' true." And again, "How d' ye ken it a', mon?"

When an opportunity for the signing of the pledge came, and Mr. Gough gave the invitation, she stepped forward and asked to sign. A bystander said that she'd not keep a pledge until midnight. At this she squared away toward him for a fight. Mr. Gough appealed to her, and asked if she *could* keep the pledge.

"If I say I wull, I con."

"Will you say you will?"

"I wull."

"Then give me your hand on it."

She took Mr. Gough's hand, and then signed the pledge. Mr. Gough said to her, "May God help you to keep it, my good woman." And he left her.

"Two years after that evening I was again in Glasgow," said Mr. Gough, "and I saw her once more,—no longer 'Hell Fire,' but respected 'Mrs. Archer.' I sat down at the tea-table with her and her daughter

in their humble Scotch home. She told me of the struggles she had had in her purpose of keeping the pledge in those two years, and of her triumphs by the help of God. But sometimes, she said, she would dream in the night that she was drunk as of old, and then she would get up and go down on her knees and cry out in prayer, 'God keep me! God keep me! I canna get drunk ony mair.'

"Her daughter added, 'Yes, Mr. Gough, I'll wake in the night, and I'll hear mither cry, on her knees, "God keep me. God keep me. I canna get drunk ony mair;" and I'll call to her, "Come back to bed, mither. You'll take your death o' could." And she'll say to me, "No, no, I've been drameing I was drunk again, and I'm praying and crying, 'God keep me! God keep me! I canna get drunk ony mair.'"

"Ah!" said Mr. Gough, "it was not the pledge that had kept her, but it was her faith that sounded out in the cry of her heart continually, 'God keep me! God keep me! I canna get drunk ony mair.'"

And this is the hope of the tempted soul, whether he be one who has grown stronger by long resistance, or one who has been weakened by frequent yielding. He is truly strong only when he is consciously weak.

Here also is our best lesson from the recorded fact in our text. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil;" "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2 : 18).

VICTORIOUS IN DEATH AND IN LIFE

XII

VICTORIOUS IN DEATH AND IN LIFE

In all active service in human warfare, victory is the chief thing struggled for. It is victory that is desired, it is victory that is hoped for, it is victory that is to be rejoiced in. There may be, indeed, an ultimate good that is to be attained through a long war, in which battle after battle is fought at terrible cost of life and limb, and at a fearful outlay by the powers engaged; but this can come only as a result of victory. Therefore, to the soldiers in active warfare it is victory that has the first thought and place in all their doing and their enduring.

And veteran soldiers in our Civil War learned that those who lived through a battle had more yet to do and to endure than those who fell in that fight. One who lived worthily and who fell at his post, dying as he had lived, was a victor beyond the necessity of another struggle. But a soldier who lived through one battle in that long war had to realize that he must be ready to meet other dangers, from which his fallen comrades were spared. Hence a lesson of a veteran soldier's experience was that living is, on this account, more to be dreaded than dying. Many a soldier at

the close of a battle, in that sadly prolonged war, felt in his weakness and exhaustion that his fallen comrades were happily spared the renewed fights which he must enter. Yet as a true soldier he realized that it was his duty to brave living with its penalties and ever-renewed outlays, as well as dying with its final victory. And this conviction was the truest test and climax of the right-minded soldier.

In home life, as in army service, I found occasion to consider this truth and to emphasize it before my fellows. Hence there grew this sermon as to our Saviour's assurance that those living in him shall have victory in living and in dying.

NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8 : 38, 39).

"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life"—
"neither *death*, nor *life*"! *Death* stands over against *life* in ceaseless hostility, here in a world where all who are not mourning their dead are themselves struggling to live.

In the ancient Roman theaters, on the occasion of the gladiatorial games, the contestants, who had entered the arena for its life-and-death struggles, were accustomed to pass in review before the seat of the Imperial "Editor," or Exhibitor, of the games, and, while still in the flush of strength and of bounding life, to say, in conscious recognition of their impending doom, "*Morituri salutamus!*" "We who are about to die, salute you!" And this grim salutation of the battle-arrayed gladiators might well be that of all of us, whenever we leave our homes of a morning, or return to our loved ones of an evening; or when

we part with those who are dear to us, for even the briefest vacation, or other absence ; and so when they and we are come together again in gladness : “ *Morituri salutamus!* ” “ We who are about to die, salute you ! ”

Already we are within the arena of conflict ; we are moving steadily toward the climax of the struggle ; and, in more than a poetic sense, our pulsing heart-throbs are the muffled drum-beats of the funeral march.

You and I are facing death, here in this house this morning,—you in your place, and I in mine ; and there is reason why, in the strictest literalism, I should now preach to you

“ As never sure to preach again,
And as a dying man, to dying men.”¹

It is old Flavel, I think, who has corrected so forcefully the *common* thought of our nearness to death. We speak of death, he says, as a precipice, toward whose brink we are moving blindly. That brink may be just before us, or it may be still at a distance. When we reach it, one step is our last. *That* is our thought. But, no, he adds, death is not a precipice between which and ourselves there is a possible, though an uncertain distance ; death is a preepice along the edge of which we have been moving, in blindness, from our very birth. At this moment, as always, there is but a step between us and death (1 Sam. 20 : 3).

¹ Richard Baxter.

And death, thus ever-proximate, is always and only our *enemy*. Death is not, can not be, a friend. We may defy death. We may even come to long for or to welcome death. We may be sure of triumph over death. But neither our courage, our craving, nor our confidence, can change the hostile attitude of death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed ['abolished,' the Revision renders it,] is death" (1 Cor. 15 : 26); the last enemy that *shall be* abolished, but that remains as an enemy *yet awhile*. That is the way the Bible states it; and that is the way we are very likely to view it—in our testing-times.

When we look into the faces of our dead dear ones, and when we stand above their sodded graves, we say, instinctively, "An enemy hath done this" (Matt. 13 : 28). Even the certainty of their joy immortal can not make their absence our mortal joy.

"Immortal? I feel it, and know it;
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret,—
Immortal away from me.

"There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard,
Would scarce stay a child in his race;
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of space.

"Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearly true:
But since the earth fell on *her* coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

“ Console if you will, I can bear it :
’Tis a well-meant alms of breath :
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made death other than death.”¹

But it is *death*,—this death which can not seem “other than death ;” this death which confronts us all and always as our enemy,—this death it is against which the faith-inspired Apostle rings out, jubilantly, in his confident climax of defiance : “ I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, . . . nor any other creature [any other created thing], shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

There are some things which death can not do, even at its worst. Death can not separate either the dead believer or the living believer from his Saviour. Jesus came into this world of the dying, and passed out from it through the gates of death into the world of the undying. He knows what it is to sorrow over the work of death, to shrink from death, and to suffer death. He is familiar with the weakness and with the needs of his loved ones here, who are appointed to die. He feels with them tenderly, and his presence and help are assured to them unto the end. “ Let not your heart be troubled,” he says. “ In my Father’s house are many mansions. . . . I go [on before you] to prepare a place for you. . . . And . . . where I am, there ye may be also ” (John 14 : 1-3).

¹ James Russell Lowell.

However and wherever the chasm of death is to be crossed by a believer, Jesus, from beyond it, will give help and cheer to his follower, on this side of it and in its crossing. And the overleaping of that chasm will not separate the Guide and his follower, but will only unite them the more closely, and forever.

While climbing the upper summits of the mountains of Sinai, I was led by an Arab guide who was familiar with every step of the perilous way. Finally we came to the edge of a threatening precipice of granite, which sloped away from our very feet far down to a yawning ravine of jagged rocks below. Closer and closer to that dizzy edge lay our narrow path, until the path actually lost itself, at a point where a jutting crag before us seemed to forbid all passage, unless directly over the mad precipice itself. And there my guide disappeared, for the moment. He had swung himself around that crag, over that bewildering cliff, and was now at the base of a mountain dome, above and beyond the path he had left.

As I stood for a moment, with whirling brain, at that appalling brink of death, I saw, just above and before me, the wiry feet of my trusty guide beyond that jutting crag ; and I heard his voice calling out cheerily : "Cling to my feet, and swing yourself over the pass ! I can hold you ! Have no fear !"

It was not a tempting thing to do. But it was that or nothing. I caught at those sturdy ankles with a grip as for my life ! A moment's stay of breath !

One spring along the frightful edge! The crag and the chasm were passed, and I and my guide were together on the unchanging rock—where the crown of that mountain of God was ours.

So with us all, as we clamber the steeps of earth, under the guidance of him who has passed every step of the way before. When at last our narrow path is skirting the brink of the yawning grave, and the forbidding crag of death juts before us, and we realize, for the moment, that our Guide has gone over beyond that crag,—even then we can hear the voice of Jesus, calling to us cheerily, "Come unto me! I will uphold thee!" And, clinging with the grip of faith to

"Those blessed feet
Which eighteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross,"¹

We can, with one instant's bated breath, and with a single swing of soul, pass beyond death, to stand with our Guide on the enduring rock of the eternal hills of God.

If, indeed, for a moment, at such a crisis, we are "in a strait betwixt two," whether to stay or to go, faith tells us surely, that "to depart, and to be with Christ," is very "far better" (Phil. 1 : 23). Therefore it is that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psa. 116 : 15). Therefore it is that the believer can cry triumphantly, in the face of death as his enemy, "I am persuaded, that neither

¹ Shakespeare.

death, nor life, . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

It is, indeed, that very love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, that permits the dying of any of Christ's dear ones. Herodotus tells, from Solon, a touching story of Biton and Cleöbis, two noble young sons of a priestess of Juno. They were celebrated for their devoted affection to their mother. On a great feast-day of Juno, they insisted on drawing their mother in her chariot to the temple, a distance of six miles or so. The populace applauded their filial affection. The mother was gratefully proud of their loving devotedness.

Taking those sons with her into the temple where she ministered, that mother prayed for them to the goddess whom she served. Not wealth, nor honors, nor long life, she asked for them, specifically, but her prayer was that the goddess would grant to them just that which the goddess should know to be the best of all gifts for sons so worthy. Having thus prayed, the mother fell calmly asleep, with her sons near her, within the temple precincts.

When the morning came, those two sons were dead. The mother's prayer for them had been answered. The best gift of the goddess was theirs.

Are not the love and the wisdom of our God as real and as great as are those of the Pagan goddess? Aye! "I heard a voice from heaven saying, . . . Write, Blessed are the dead which *die* in the Lord

from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14: 13).

Nor does the death of one's dear ones—any more than the death of one's self—separate the believer from his Saviour, or lessen his sense of that Saviour's loving nearness. On the contrary, every fatal blow of the enemy of life attaches with a new link the survivors in the conflict to the commander in whose service is the fighting and the falling.

Look at that familiar picture of the veterans of Waterloo gathered for the last time in their annual reunion with the Iron Duke. Is there a barrier, or is there a bond of union, between those war-worn captains and their great commander, in the fact that at his call they and he faced death together on a field where those whom they loved were stricken down in his loyal service?

Ah! my friends, I tell you there is no such loving devotedness of soldiers toward any commander who has been over them only in the days of peace, or at times of parade, as toward one who has led them in a score of hard-fought battles—out of which they have come alive, but bronzed and scarred for life.

Aye! and there is no such bond of human comradeship as that which joins in heart-fellowship those who have stood shoulder to shoulder in the shock of battle, and who have wept together over those who there fell from their sides.

“Ho! comrades of the camp and field,
What though the world be wide!
The hands that met above the dead,
Earth never can divide.”¹

So, likewise, there is added love for Christ, in the believer's heart, through each glimpse of Christ in the hour of a dear one's death-struggle; and there is a closer bond of Christian fellowship between those who have mourned their dead together.

He who would enter the innermost chambers of Christ's ministering love, must pass through the death-room of those who are dearer than life to him. Only thus can he realize the fulness of the beatitude: “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted” (Matt. 5:4). Only thus can he be able to say, out of his sanctified experience, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Cor. 1:3, 4).

“Even here
From his dear children's eyes, God wipes the tear;
And who would mourn a tear should fill his eye
For God to dry?
Angels might envy man his tearful eyes
When God's hand dries.”²

Heaven is nearer to those whose dear ones are

¹ M. A. Lathbury.

² A. E. Hamilton.

already there, and Christ is dearer to those whose best loved ones have entered into his rest.

Aye! and those who for the first time mourn their own dead, are, by that very experience, brought into a holy fellowship of Christian sorrow and Christian sympathy and Christian comfort, the benefits of which no unbereaved soul is privileged to share.

No! No! Whatever else is the power of death as an enemy, "I am persuaded, that" not "*death*, . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Neither death, nor *life*"! Mark that! Death first, and then life, in the ascending order of dangers which confront the Christian believer. Nor is this an anti-climax in the plan of the inspired Apostle, for death is ever a lesser danger than life, in the experience of the disciple of Jesus.

Dying is but a minor matter, at the worst. A moment, and all is over. Its one struggle is the last. But to live on, with a new struggle every day, and with no end to the fighting, is a very different matter, at the best.

"Blessed are those who die for God,
And earn the martyr's crown of light;
Yet he who lives for God may be
A greater conqueror in his sight."¹

While I was a prisoner of war in South Carolina, I met a brave and determined Southern officer, who

¹ A. A. Proctor.

spoke in intensest earnestness of the inflexible purpose of his people to resist all efforts at their subjugation. When the war was over, I was again in South Carolina, and I met the same officer once more.

Greeting me pleasantly at this time, he said :

"I little thought, when we met last, that the war would end as it did. But we were ready for the end long before it came! It was your General Grant who wore us out. We could stand anything but his eternal pound, pound, pound. We would gladly have gone into one great battle, or another, to fight the thing out. But he just pounded right straight along, with no let-up. If we whipped him one day, he was at it just the same the next morning. A victory didn't seem to help us any more than a defeat. It was just fight, fight, fight, every day of the year, no matter what came of the fighting. We couldn't stand *that*, and so we longed for the end to come."

And that is the sort of fighting which wears out the best and the bravest soldiers, in any line of warfare ; or which taxes their courage most sorely, if it does not wear them out. It is not the one death-struggle, but the ceaseless life-struggles, that the stoutest heart shrinks from.

It is the meeting the same temptations over and over again. It is the finding one's self weak at one's strongest point, and again the being assailed unexpectedly just where one is weakest. It is the failing to find any perceptible gain through a score of vic-

tories over a foe which comes up only the more vigorous after every fresh defeat. It is the seeing that those who are stronger than one's self are overborne in the fiftieth contest, when they had fought through forty-nine similar fights without a failure. It is the strangeness of God's way of letting those who love him battle on without a conclusive triumph in any one contest—once for all. It is the ceaseless mystery of the life that is, with so much power permitted to evil, and such seeming advantages for the time to the adversaries of Christ and of Christ's dear ones.

It was one of the sweetest-spirited of Christian singers who said, wearily :

“ Oh, it is hard to work for God,
To rise and take his part
Upon this battle-field of earth,
And not sometimes lose heart !

“ He hides himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God ;
He is least seen when all the powers
Of ill are most abroad ;

“ Or he deserts us in the hour
The fight is all but lost ;
And seems to leave us to ourselves
Just when we need him most.

“ Oh, there is less to try our faith
In our mysterious creed
Than in the godless look of earth
In these our hours of need.”¹

¹ F. W. Faber.

Do you question the courage, or the character of believers who yield to feelings of this sort, at any point in their life-struggle? Some pretty strong men in the world's history, some stalwart sons of God, have felt that way, whether you and I have always been above such weakness or not.

It was none other than Moses,—Moses, the meek and majestic man of God,—who, after seeing all the miracles of Jehovah in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the desert, and at Mount Sinai, and after actually communing with God “face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exod. 33 : 11), was so weary of his prolonged conflict with evil, that he was tempted to give up both his struggle and his charge, and his tired moan to God for death was, “I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand [off-hand, outright], if I have found favour in thy sight ; and let me not see [no longer see] my wretchedness” (Num. 11 : 14, 15).

It was the even-minded patriarch, Job,—Job, whom God himself pointed out as foremost among the sons of men for uprightness and for fidelity,—who, having bowed himself in loving submissiveness under stroke after stroke of bitter calamity, wilted at last, under the continuing pressure upon him, and longed for the end to come. “Oh that I might have my request,” he cried ; “and that God would grant me the thing that I long for ! Even that it would please God to destroy me ; that he would let loose

his hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort" (Job 6 : 8-10) in death, if not in life.

It was heroic Elijah, the rugged old prophet of Israel, who—after receiving proof that God was ready to open or to close the heavens, or even to raise the dead to life, at his cry for help ; and after triumphing gloriously in his single-handed defiance of the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal—was too weak to bear up without wincing under the ceaseless "pound, pound, pound," of his persistent opposers ; and who, hurrying into the wilderness, threw himself despondently under the scanty shade of a retem bush, "and he requested for himself that he might die ; and [he] said, It is enough [it is too much] ; now, O Lord, take away my life ; for I am not better than my fathers [I make no gain in living on]" (1 Kings 19 : 4).

It was that most courageous of all the God-called and faith-filled followers of Christ, Paul the Apostle, who, after enduring unflinchingly "in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from" his "countrymen [the Jews], in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11 : 26, 27), and who, being still kept at the tireless task of battling his own body daily, lest after all his trials and triumphs he should yet become "a castaway" (1 Cor. 9 : 27) ; he it was who cried out, in all earnestness, that "to depart, and

to be with Christ " would be " far better " (Phil. 1 : 23) than to live on " at this poor dying rate ; " and who was sure that for himself, whatever it was " to live, " " to die " would be a " gain " (Phil. 1 : 21).

Aye ! and many another believer, since the days of this apostle, has realized how much harder it is to live than it would be to die ; how much greater are the dangers of living than of dying—to one who is ready to die.

Unless, indeed, you and I have more sublime patience than Job, more sanctified meekness than Moses, more stalwart courage than Elijah, more holy zeal and faith than Paul, we also are liable to similar weariness and shrinkings, in our life-struggle,—unless, perchance, it be the case that our lack of strength of character forbids to us the possibilities of such strength, in either direction—of action, or of reaction.

A while ago I sat by the dying bedside of a dear girl in my Philadelphia home. As I held her hand, which, all unconsciously to herself, the damp of death was already chilling, she said to me with soulful earnestness : " Dr. Trumbull, I'm not one bit afraid to *die*. I know that Jesus is my Saviour, and if I should die now, he would take me right to himself. But I'm expecting to get well, and that's what troubles me. When I'm up again, will Jesus give me strength to live all the time as I ought to live ? "

And I tell you, my friends, those words did not show spiritual weakness on the part of that dear young disciple. On the contrary, they showed her spiritual discernment. As she lay there, between living and

dying, she realized that to die was a lesser danger than to live ; that the one death-struggle was a small thing in comparison with a long series of life-struggles. And in this she was at one with Paul, and Elijah, and Job, and Moses, and many another child of God, in the olden time and in the later ; for to them and to her, and to every spiritually illumined soul, death has fewer dangers than life to the believer in Jesus, because here, in the life that now is, our wrestling is "not [alone] against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6 : 12).

But life also—life with all its perils—has its limitations of power for harm to him who is joined by faith with that Saviour whose loving power is limitless. It is to *life*, as well as to *death*, that Paul bids defiance in the triumphant ascription of our text: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life,"—neither death the lesser peril, nor life the larger ; neither death with its single danger, nor life with its dangers upon dangers,—“neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

There are ten Bible promises to the living where there is one Bible promise to the dying ; ten promises for the life that is, where there is one promise for the life to come ; ten promises of strength in the bat-

tle of life to one promise of joy after life's battle is over. If, therefore, life's struggles are harder than the struggle of death, the promises of help in the struggles of life are correspondingly more prominent in the Word of God.

Aye! there is never a peril to the Christian believer in his life-course, over against which there does not stand a divine token of assurance and cheer to the imperiled one.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8 : 35-37).

You say that you are spiritually weak, that you lack strength for life's battlings. Christ's cheering assurance comes to you : "My grace is sufficient for thee : for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12 : 9)—my power is shown at its fulness in disciples who are so weak as to feel helpless without me.

You say that temptations press you on every side, and you are afraid they will overbear you at some point. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10 : 13).

You say that it is not so much the greatness of any one temptation, as the incessant pressure of repeated temptations. You are growing tired and faint under

the ceaseless "pound, pound, pound," on your over-taxed forces. "He giveth power to the faint ; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength" (Isa. 40 : 29).

You say that you can stand it yet awhile, with the strength that is now given you ; but you shrink from the possibilities of the future, if the coming years are to bring no let-up to the strain upon you. Hear God's loving response to this mistrusting: "Even to old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you : I have made, and I will bear ; yea, I will carry, and will deliver" (Isa. 46 : 4).

You say that even though you are kept up in your life-battlings, you lack that fellow-help, and that personal sympathy, which you used to think you could depend on ; for so many a trusted one has changed, or has failed you, while those from whom you hoped most have disappointed you,—that you now seem really alone in your strugglings. His answer comes tenderly: "I the Lord change not" (Mal. 3 : 6). "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isa. 66 : 13). "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1 : 5).

Who can despair, in the face of such promises ?

After all, the believer's life-course is only one step at a time, and every step onward is also a step upward ; for

"The road winds up hill all the way,
Yes, to the very end." ¹

¹ Christine G. Rossetti.

At the severest, the believer's endurance is only minute by minute, and every improved minute is an attainment for eternity.

"Do not look at life's long sorrow ;
See how small each moment's pain.
God will help thee for to-morrow :
So, each day begin again.

"Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do or bear.
Luminous the crown, and holy,
When each gem is set with care."¹

Added life-battlings give not only added dangers, but also added possibilities of victory and of glory. Every new triumph in the life that is, is an acquisition for the life to come ; not by way of reward, but by way of development ; not in enlarged merit, but in expanded character.

These conflicts of soul, which furrow the face, and which whiten the hair, and which rack the very heart of hearts, endear a disciple to his Saviour and fit him for greater joys and for higher honors in that Saviour's presence—when the war is over. Aye ! and they give him increased efficiency while the war is still in progress.

There is one token of a soldier's standing which no gold can purchase, no favor can win, nor can even the government itself confer it as an act of grace ; and that is the "service-chevron," a little strip of lace upon the soldier's sleeve, which marks a completed full period

¹ A. A. Proctor.

of army enlistment,—of two years, or three, or five, it may be. And when a uniform shows two, or five, or possibly even ten, of these “service-chevrons,” there is an added character to the veteran who wears it,—a character which can come only of experience in hard campaigning, a character which is sure to show itself in the bronzed face, in the compacted muscles, and in the whole manly bearing of the soldier-hero.

The Queen may put her royal son into the army, in a place of high command, and she can multiply his decorations, which are proofs of her royal favor; but she can never give him a “service-chevron,” or a ribbon or a medal which marks an honorably completed campaign, until he has served and battled all a campaign through. And right alongside of that fair-faced prince-royal, with his uniform showily bedecked with its peace-won honors, there may stand a veteran officer with an armless sleeve, and a sightless eye, and a sabre-slashed cheek, and a breast hung over with battle-medals, who shall deserve, and shall have, the praise of all observers, for his service and his achievements, beyond all that is conceded to the honored son of the sovereign.

So in the service of the King of kings. The fair-faced child may be promoted by the Sovereign’s grace, and stand in heaven

“A victor, ere he drew a sword;
Before he toiled, at rest.”

But he can never be the veteran of a hundred fights, without fighting through battle a hundred times.

Moreover, in life's battlings, each faithfully completed period of enlistment adds a service-chevron to the uniform of both the inner and the outer man, to mark the hero-veteran before all the world.

“Every wrinkled, care-worn brow
Bears the record, Something done !
Some time, somewhere, then or now,
Battles lost, or battles won.”

Thank God, then, that *you* are permitted to live on and become veterans, instead of having promotion without a term of active service. And at the opening of every new conflict before you, look forward hopefully to a new victory and a new attainment. As Admiral Nelson said confidently, when the battle of the Nile was beginning, “Here’s for a peerage, or Westminster Abbey !” So you can say, with sublimer confidence, as the combat thickens about you, “Here’s for a higher stand in Christ, or for final rest with Christ !”

Ah ! it is even *glorious* to live on in life’s painful battlings, so long as Christ wants us to fight ; as, again, it is *blessed* to die, when Christ calls us to rest from this fighting. And, surely, if he honors us by trusting our fidelity in prolonged campaigning, we ought to honor him by trusting his fidelity in sustaining us until our campaigning is over.

“Wherefore take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the

breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace ; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one " (Eph. 6 : 13-16).

" Dread not the din and smoke,
The stifling poison of the fiery air ;
Courage ! It is the battle of thy God ;
Stand ! and for him learn how to do and dare.

"What though ten thousand fall !
And the red field with the dear dead be strewn ;
Grasp but more bravely thy bright shield and sword ;
Fight to the last, although thou fight'st alone.

"What though ten thousand faint,
Desert, or yield, or in weak terror flee !
Heed not the panic of the multitude ;
Thine be the Captain's watchword,—
Victory ! " ¹

And "thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory [in *death* and in *life*] through our Lord Jesus Christ" ! Amen.

¹ H. Bonar.

REJOICING IN PEACE

XIV

REJOICING IN PEACE

Only the boy who has been away from home long enough to be really homesick knows how to appreciate the privilege and delights of home. Only the soldier who has fought and endured, and suffered the privations and disappointments and deferred hopes of a prolonged war, knows how to appreciate and to rejoice in finally attained peace. It is impossible for the young in these glad days to understand what were the feelings of the Union soldiers when peace finally came after the four long years of our Civil War.

When, after Appomattox Court-House, our brigade returned to Richmond, and was given a position, for rest and guard duty, in the suburbs of the long-besieged capital of the Confederacy, the rejoicings of officers and men were unbounded and overwhelming. No more fightings, no more privations, no more fears, no more enemies for us. Peace had come. What more was there to long for now? The national flag waved over the Confederate capital. Our military department commander had his headquarters in the residence of "President" Jefferson Davis. Federal guards moved undisturbed before the home of Gen-

eral Lee, and had their stations in Libby Prison, in Castle Thunder, and on Belle Island. On all sides were evidences of victory and of peace. It was almost too good to be true. Yet it was all true, while it was more than good.

It was then that I wrote and preached to my regiment, which was stationed just north of Richmond, a sermon on Peace. By special request I repeated this sermon before the Twenty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment, which was on guard in the city, and the commander of which was in charge of Libby Prison, where I had been confined. That sermon I give herewith in its complete form as then preached. Its spirit and its letter seem appropriate for the closing of this little collection of army-chaplain teachings and preachings.

PEACE AT LAST

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee (Isa. 26 : 3).

Peace ! What a precious word. How joyous and full of comfort to all. And to the soldier how much it means. If any appreciate its full force and blessedness, you do. From love of peace, you left your homes and came to the war. To "seek peace, and pursue it" (Psa. 34 : 14), you turned away from mother and sister, from wife and child, gave up all that you had before deemed essential to enjoyment, and entered upon a life of severest trial and greatest exposure and peril. You have suffered and sacrificed for peace, longed for peace, prayed for peace, fought for peace.

The hope of peace has kept you up in all these weary, waiting weeks of war ; its deferring has made your hearts sick, and has saddened and depressed you in many a troubled hour. While on the lonely vedette post, at the dead of night in the pine forest, with no sound to be heard but the chirp of the cricket or the call of the whip-poor-will, as you peered out into the darkness in the direction of the foe, and watched vigilantly while you longed for the next relief,—you have

thought of peace, and wondered when and how it would come, and whether you would live to see and enjoy it. You have dreamed of peace while you lay in camp, or as you napped it by the wayside or in the battle-line, waiting the order to advance. On guard, during dragging hours in hospital ; on the sea-washed deck, or in the close, dark, dingy hold of the army transport ; bivouacking, marching, throwing up earth-works, resting under cover, broiling in the trenches, or sitting in the chapel tent,—you have had peace before your eyes as a pleasant vision which you hardly dared hope to see.

You have written home of peace. You have talked of peace with your comrades by the cook-tent or the field camp-fire. The possibility of peace has nerved your arms in the hour of fiercest conflict, and that you might help to secure peace you have stood unflinchingly while comrades fell from your side in the shock of battle, have pressed forward with the advance in the deadly charge, or grappled with the enemy in the fearful hand-to-hand struggle on the parapet or within the surmounted fortress.

And when there was a lull in the storm of war, or one victory or another to our national arms had given fresh ground for glad expectation and assured hope, you have asked of some intelligent comrade, or trusted commander, or of your chaplain, how long it would probably be before peace might be attained ; and you have wished that he could give you some better answer than that he waited and wondered and longed

and prayed with the same restless desire and in the same ignorance and blindness as yourselves.

What cared you for victory save as an earnest of peace? What was Roanoke; what was New Berne; what was Kinston; what were James Island and Fort Wagner; what were Deep Bottom and New Market Heights; what was Petersburg, to *you*;—what were Antietam, and Fort Donelson, and New Orleans, and Gettysburg, and Vicksburg, and Chattanooga, and Atlanta, and Savannah, and Charleston, and Richmond, to the nation, in comparison with Appomattox Court-House? The others brought glory; that brought *peace*. Were your hearts ever before so elated? Did they ever so bound with gladness as then? Did you ever give God thanks with reverent gratitude so heartily as when the announcement that Lee had surrendered brought you assurance that the end of the war was reached, and that at last *peace* had come? Peace! Peace! God be praised for peace!

Peace has been ever deemed a synonym of the richest blessing, and its possession the most favored lot of man. "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee *peace*" (Num. 6 : 26), was the concluding benediction of Aaron and his sons upon the house of Israel, according to the divinely ordained liturgy. David declared that the end of the perfect man and the upright is *peace* (Psa. 37 : 37). When the Angel of the Lord came to the shepherds on the plain of Bethlehem, bringing the good tidings of great joy to all people, while the glory of the

Lord shone round about, the glad cry of the multitude of the heavenly host which rang through the universe in annunciation of the advent of the Redeemer of the world was, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace*, good will toward men" (Luke 2 : 9-14). And when our Saviour was returning to his celestial home, his gracious words to his beloved disciples were, in tenderness and love, "*Peace* I leave with you, my *peace* I give unto you" (John 14 : 27).

Isaiah, sweet poet and glad prophet of God's chosen people, describing sadly the course of the church in the following years, told of dark days when God's people were to be tried and sore distressed, and calamity should be over all the land, and utter destruction would seem to await those who before had been favored in all the earth. But he gave hope of national redemption and of a new season of rarest prosperity, when God should make unto all people a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, when he would destroy the face of the covering so long cast over the people, and the veil spread over the nations, when he should wipe away tears from off all faces, and take away the rebuke of his people from off all the earth. "In that day shall this song," Isaiah says, "be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose

mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26 : 1-3).

The joy of the saints is pictured as peace—"perfect peace." And I have often thought that in all the precious pages of the Old Testament writings no single passage is more beautiful, or contains a richer assurance of God's love and power, than the text I have named : "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee."

The peace of the trusting child of God is continuous and undisturbed. It is not like an armistice preceded and to be followed by bitter conflict. It is not like the fatal calm just before the battle opens, while the skirmishers are cautiously feeling for the enemy. It is not like the lull for an hour at Petersburg, or a day at Bermuda Hundred, with the nervous consciousness ever present that each second of quiet may be the last ; nor yet like the weeks of inaction at New Berne, St. Helena, Seabrook Island, or St. Augustine, with the war still dragging on and a call to a new front likely to come at any time. There is no real rest—no thorough refreshing of body and mind—to the soldier, wherever he may find himself, so long as a state of warfare continues in his country.

It is only when permanent peace to the entire country is secured, with no danger of a resumption of hostilities, that he can be kept in perfect or unmarred peace.

As the soldier's rest can be after the war for which

he enlisted has closed, so is the faithful saint's rest always. He knows that *his* fighting is at an end. There may be war for others, but not for him. He will look up no spiritual Mexicos in which to exercise his martial spirit, now that the dearest interests for which he battled are secure. Even amid wars and rumors of wars in other lands on every side, he is kept in perfect peace ; nothing alarms, nothing disturbs him. By day and by night, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and health, when tried and tempted, when betrayed by trusted friends, when disappointed in fondest hopes, when bereaved, when forsaken, when God's ways are most inscrutable, when all about him seems darkest, he whose mind is stayed on the loving Omnipotent One is kept in perfect peace.

He whose mind is stayed on God ! Not all in this weary world have peace. " There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked " (Isa. 57 : 21). The law in the members is warring against the law of the mind continually of him who does not serve and trust Jehovah (Rom. 7 : 23). The man who lacks confidence in Jesus as his Saviour and Friend, has no delightful repose of mind and conscience. Any of you who do not count yourselves devoted children of God are at the best restless.

If you are scoffers, or are deliberate violators of his law,—if you are profane or intemperate or dishonest,—if you are ill-tempered, or unfaithful in any way to the demands of duty,—you are, with other

wicked ones, "like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57 : 20). If you are passably correct in deportment, or even reverent toward God and faithful to your neighbor, yet have not your mind stayed on God (Phil. 4 : 7), you lack that peace "which passeth all understanding" which comes from the knowledge that your Redeemer liveth, Jehovah, your Redeemer's Father and your Father, reigneth supremely, and that all things work together for good to you who love him.

If your inner thoughts in your calmer moments, in seasons of retirement, while by yourselves, on guard, or in your tents, or on your beds, could testify, this truth would stand out before all the world as it is declared in revelation : that they—and they alone—are kept in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on God, who have fought the good fight of faith and come off conquerors through him who loved us and gave himself for us, and now have rest from war.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26 : 3). "Because he trusteth in thee." There is no repose but in confidence. A man standing on the edge of a precipice must be sure of his footing or he can not be at ease. A man on the skirmish-line must be sure of his rifle. A regiment in battle, however gallant and efficient, wants to know that its flanks are protected, and that the regiment at right or left won't break and run at the first fire.

He who trusteth in God has confidence. He stands

on the Rock Christ Jesus. He shall not be cast down. He is clad in the whole armor of God; no weapon that is formed against him shall prosper. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psa. 34: 7). They are protected in front, flank, and rear.

It is easy to have confidence when there is no apparent cause for alarm. The very child who would tremble and fear in a thunder-storm is cheerful and undisturbed on a bright summer morning. The family with its circle unbroken and all its surroundings those of affluence, of refinement, of health, and of beauty, can have confidence that all is and is to be well with them, even though they would be anxious or even terror-stricken if malignant disease were to invade their neighborhood, or if incendiaries and assassins were known to be at work in their vicinity. Soldiers who would be demoralized by hearing an enemy in their rear, or by an unexpected sweep of grape and canister from a masked battery just in front, would go on boldly while the enemy was falling back and the shouts of victorious comrades came up encouragingly from right and left far up and down the battle-line.

If the child trusted implicitly his strong and loving father, and had learned to rely unhesitatingly on his word and his supporting presence, he might stand unmoved while the lightnings flashed and the thunders pealed from the dark storm-clouds, and might enjoy the magnificence and grandeur of the scene as pointed out to him by the one on whom his young mind was

stayed. If the family felt themselves already guarded against the dreaded contagion, and had no doubt of the bolts or bars of their dwelling, or the faithfulness of their long-tried watchman, they might still find enjoyment in the delights of their home circle, because they trusted in what had never failed them.

If the soldiers knew their commander and that he had never been defeated, and they had just received word from him that all was right, or if they were so confident of their own strength that they could rush to the capture of the battery before its second discharge, they would be still steady, still faithful, as though all about them was indicative of present triumph.

He who trusteth in God, he whose mind is really stayed on God, is just as cheerful, just as calm, or is as fully resigned and hopeful when the sky of his life is overcast, and the atmosphere breeds disease or bodes death to those less favored, and when others seem to be suffering defeat, as in the brightest hour of health and victory. It is just when there is most need of special strength that God gives it to his trustful children. It is just when there is room for doubt that assured confidence in a never-failing support comes to the aid of him who enjoys it.

“As thou wilt ! still I can believe ;
Never did the word of promise fail.
Faith can hold it fast, and feel it sure,
Though temptations cloud, and fears assail.
Why art thou disquieted, O my soul ?
When thy Father knows, and rules the whole.

"As thou wilt, O Lord! I ask no more.
With the promise, Faith pursues her way;
Patience can endure through sorrow's night,
Hope can look beyond to Heaven's own day,
Love can wait, and trust, and labor still;
Life and death shall be, according to Thy will!"¹

All God's signs of power and sovereignty but give new ground of confidence to those whose minds are stayed on God. Does the young lion shrink from the strong frame, the stout limb, and the sharp claws of the king of beasts? Or do these but give greater confidence to the dependent creature in whose behalf they are exercised for the obtaining of daily food? Yet "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Psa. 34: 10). Does the loyal citizen of the Republic have anxiety and fear because of the vast authority centered in the Chief Magistrate of the nation? Or does he, from a knowledge of this, have restful satisfaction in the thought that his personal and social interests as a citizen are sure of being protected against all foreign and domestic foes? Yet it is not safe to put implicit trust in man, nor in the son of man in whom is no sure help (Psa. 146: 3); for the Lord alone doeth wondrously (Psa. 72: 18), and there is none good but One, that is God (Luke 18: 19).

Do you enjoy perfect peace? The end of the war in which you have fought so bravely and endured so nobly is at hand. Is there no warfare in your mem-

¹ Neumeister, "Hymns from Land of Luther," page 145.

bers, the issue of which gives you doubt? Are you sure of victory over self, of victory over sin, of victory over death? God keeps those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on him. If you are still distrustful—if you are not yet a rejoicing conqueror—it is because of your lacking restful faith in Jesus, not having your mind stayed on him, as your only, your all-sufficient Redeemer.

Is your mind stayed on Jesus? If so, you need never know fear, for perfect love brings perfect peace and casteth out fear. You will not be without trials, but you may have peace of mind in all your trials, and assured confidence for the happy end. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psa. 34: 19). "The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Psa. 34: 22).

If your mind is not stayed on Jesus, what is its stay? What is your trust this hour? What gives you comfort in sorrow? What gives you unalloyed joy in peace? What is your source of strength for daily duty? What is your hope for the eternal future? Who stands for you now in the Father's presence? Who will welcome you at the final judgment? There is but one Redeemer, but one sure comfort for any sorrowing, sinning child of man. Every other stay will fail as the broken reed,—piercing, not upholding, him who leans on it for support. Peace in the soul is found only under the banner of the

Prince of Peace. Whatever other flag waves above or is followed by you, will avail you nothing when you have fought your last fight on earth, however dear it may be to you while you are still a soldier of the government it represents.

Blessed be God for the peace which opens before us as a nation, with the rest it brings to us as soldiers in the Union army ! Blessed be God for the perfect peace in which those are kept whose minds are stayed on him, and who trust him wholly ! God grant that as you enter upon the joys of peace to our favored land, you may not shut out yourselves from the peace which God speaks to his people and to his saints, the peace which passeth all understanding (Psa. 85 : 8), and which is unbroken and eternal.

And now may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood [the life] of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13 : 20, 21).

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